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Near East & South Asia

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Inter-Arab Affairs

Inter-Arab Affairs: Algeria Said To Broker Iraq, Syria 'Rapprochement'

MM0603162296 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 6 Mar 96 p 1

[Report by Mahmud Ma'ruf: "Sudden Algerian Mediation Between Iraq and Syria... Boom on Border, Barriers Removed for First Time"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Rabat, AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI — Arab diplomatic sources have revealed that efforts are being made by Algeria to achieve a rapprochement between Iraq and Syria and that these efforts have made substantial progress over recent days.

The sources told AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI that Iraqi-Syrian relations were high on the agenda of the talks held between Iraqi Vice President Taha Yasin Ramadan Sunday [3 March] and between Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam and the Algerian president yesterday. The sources described these efforts as a relaunch of Algerian diplomacy. The sources said that Algeria's success in achieving Iraqi-Syrian reconciliation would restore the standing of Algerian diplomacy after a relative decline imposed by the bloody incidents it has been experiencing for four years. Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam arrived in the Algerian capital yesterday, less than 48 hours after Taha Yasin Ramadan's departure.

The sources cited members of the Iraqi delegation accompanying Ramadan as saying that the Iraqi-Syrian border has been witnessing extensive unofficial activities and that sand barriers at the Abu-al-Shamat border post have been removed.

Furthermore, the traffic in food commodities and medicines from Syria to Iraq has intensified. Iraqi sources quoted Khaddam last week as saying that Damascus was willing to officially open its border with Iraq. Khaddam condemned in official statements the attempts to interfere in Iraq's internal affairs. [passage omitted]

Inter-Arab Affairs: Arab League Chief Condemns Bombings in Israel

NC0603122696 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1105 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 6 Mar (MENA)—Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid has stated that the Arab League's condemnation and denunciation of recent events in Israel stems from the principle that the Arab world has approved and abided by the peace process. He said Arab League Resolution 5092 welcomed the peace process; any act carried out by any side is bound to obstruct this process.

In an exclusive interview with AL-MUSAWWAR, to appear in its edition on Friday [8 March], the Arab League secretary general stressed that such acts must be halted. He called for focusing every effort on the peace process. Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid stressed the need to avert any measures that could cause further tension and frustration.

The Arab League secretary general said: We all need peace and we want to strengthen the Palestinian state and President 'Arafat's role, particularly since all the signs indicate that he enjoys full support. He added that all the issues are proceeding in a manner confirming that we will see the establishment of the Palestinian state.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid said the Arab stance in general supports the unity of the Iraqi people and land and at the same time rejects any tendency toward partitioning Iraq. He added that several resolutions have been issued by the Arab League confirming the League's desire to safeguard Iraq's safety and territorial integrity.

The Arab League secretary general denied any estrangement between the Arab League and Eritrea. But he explained that there is a difference in views. Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid said that efforts are being made by Egypt, Ethiopia, and France, expressing the hope that these efforts will yield a solution acceptable to the two sides.

Asked about Israeli documents that talk about the building of an alliance with particular states surrounding the Arab countries, such as Turkey, Iran, Ethiopia, Chad, and Senegal, Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid said this is premature talk. I believe the geographical extension contained in the documents is somewhat fanciful.

Islamic Affairs

Political Islam Review: AL-SHA'B 27 Feb

NC0603122896

[FBIS Report] The following is a comprehensive review of all items in the 27 February edition of the Arabic language newspaper AL-SHA'B that pertain to political Islamic issues.

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1. Corruption Cases Highlighted, Restrictions on Press Lamented
2. War Against Islamists Said Destroying Society's Structure
3. Selling of Public Sector Criticized
4. Asyut Violence Reported; Copts' Killings Condemned

5. Recent Arrest of Muslim Brotherhood Members Criticized
6. Arabs, Muslims Urged to Intensify Efforts To Regain Jerusalem
7. Sudan Defended Against 'Unjust' U.S. Accusations
8. Lawyers Syndicate Contests Sequestration Decision

CORRUPTION CASES HIGHLIGHTED, RESTRICTIONS ON PRESS LAMENTED

This issue of AL-SHA'B highlights stories of "corruption" in the country and suggests, in front page headlines, that the government, while restricting the freedom of the press, is covering up for the "thieves" and bribetakers.

—In a 400-word unattributed article on page 1, the paper wonders why the government is not bringing 'Abd-al-Mun'im 'Amarah, president of the Higher Youth Council and a People's Assembly member, to court for his "crime" of "seizing state land" and distributing it among ministers and top officials. The article says that while the government "oppressed" AL-SHA'B for disclosing these facts in past issues, it helped 'Amarah remain in power. The article also notes that a court condemned 'Amarah for forging voter lists in the Madinat Nasr constituency during the recent parliamentary elections.

—Another 500-word unattributed article on page 1 notes that a court found AL-SHA'B guilty in a libel case filed by Tharwat Abazah, Consultative Council member and a progovernment writer in AL-AHRAM. The article quotes anti-opposition articles written by Abazah in AL-AHRAM. It concludes that Abazah used "harsher" words and terms against the opposition than the terms used against him by AL-SHA'B.

—Another 100-word front page report by Dawud Hasan notes that a court fined AL-SHA'B's chief editor and one of its editors for publishing a corruption story involving a local council official. The paper views this as another link in the government "onslaught" against press freedom.

—To comment on this, the paper writes in a 1,000-word editorial taking up the upper one-third of its broad sheet front page: "What is happening in Egypt? How could justice be upset in a way that prevents conformity between crime and punishment? We are seeing a frightening picture in the country. Corruption is in full control, and freedom of expression is being crushed underfoot. While the corrupt get acquitted or are given immunity from trial, free journalists pay fines, or are jailed for a news item or a word in a news item they write." The editorial accuses government officials of corruption or of covering up for corruption. It urges journalists to confront the "criminal alliance between the corrupt and the despots" and it calls on the people to "wake up before it is too late." The paper emphasizes that it has all the documents to substantiate the stories it published about corruption.

—In a 3,000-word report on page 2, 'Ali al-Qammash details a corruption case involving a Supply Ministry official and his aides, citing court hearings and rulings. The case involves trade in unfit food, fraud, and profiteering, and claims 14 million pounds were reportedly squandered.

WAR AGAINST ISLAMISTS SAID DESTROYING SOCIETY'S STRUCTURE

In a 5,000-word article on page 4, Chief Editor Majdi Ahmad Husayn argues that government war against the Islamic trend will destroy Egyptian society. Seeing that the Islamic awakening in Egypt is spreading to all sectors of society, the writer says that the government cannot stop this growth. "It is like a flood that cannot be halted," he says. Husayn notes the government campaign against the "moderate Islamic trend" and against trade unions, mosques, and charitable societies. He says the government prevented representatives of the "enlightened" Islamic trend from appearing on radio and television, directed a "vicious" campaign against the Labor Party because of its Islamic orientation, attacked the Islamic Relief Committee and companies that have an Islamic character, pressured al-Azhar grand imam to follow government policy, arrested "thousands" of Islamists without charges, built special prisons for "slow physical liquidation," and issued "high-level instructions not to allow any Islamist to enter parliament." Noting that this failed to end the cycle of armed violence, the writer says that government measures only added fuel to the fire. "This campaign against the Islamic awakening," he says, "destroyed and is destroying the components of society. The Islamic awakening is like the life's blood in a body; if you drain the body, you will be left with only a corpse."

Husayn argues that when a wise secular government finds that a religious trend in the country is growing, it does not distance or liquidate it, but works to absorb it and sets rules for dealing with it. He gives examples from the United States and Israel. He explains how the political system in the United States absorbed fundamentalist Christian and right-wing organizations, some of which practiced violence, through alliance with the Republican Party. He says the U.S. government did not launch war against the religious extremists after the Oklahoma bombing, but confined the indictment to one person. He describes this as rational behavior. Discussing Israel, Husayn says its superiority over

Egypt is not basically technological, but organizational. He explains that the Israeli government succeeded in mobilizing all the Jews in Palestine and the diaspora mainly through reconciling the religious and secular parts of society. He also notes that after the assassination of late Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, the Israeli government did not launch war against the religious organizations; Rabin's killer was well treated, and no unnecessary arrests were made.

But in Egypt, Husayn says, the rulers insist on the policy of civil fighting and armed and political liquidation. If the war against the Islamic trend continues, he concludes, the rulers will be committing suicide, but the nation will survive.

SELLING OF PUBLIC SECTOR CRITICIZED

In a 2,000-word report on page 2, Ahmad 'Abd-al-Mun'im discusses the selling of the public sector "to please the IMF, the World Bank, and the United States." He claims that the government is selling this sector cheap, and that foreigners, "especially Jews," will be the major buyers. Because the Egyptian market is unable to buy the companies offered for sale, financial expert Muhammad Bilal is cited by the writer as saying, the door is now open for the Israelis, more than any others, to buy the Egyptian public sector.

—A 700-word article by Ibrahim Hasan on page 2 argues that the selling of the public sector, with buyers more likely to be foreigners, will undermine Egyptian industry and hurt Egyptian workers.

—In a 1,500-word article on page 5, Dr. 'Abd-al-Hamid al-Ghazali says while the privatization program is necessary to salvage the Egyptian economy, strict regulations must be enforced so that only Egyptian investors can buy the public sector. In the selling process, the writer says, the government must be "fully alert to any conspiracy to place Egypt under the hegemony of the enemy and its allies." He says the government must also create a healthy environment around the production process, one that respects man's dignity, rights, and freedom.

ASYUT VIOLENCE REPORTED; COPTS' KILLINGS CONDEMNED

The newspaper publishes on pages 1 and 8 a factual 800-word report by 'Amr Salman on recent violence in Asyut, Upper Egypt, noting that 30 people from the police, the Islamic Group, and the public were killed in 10 days. The reporter says that Asyut was turned into a military governorate, with scores of armored vehicles besieging the area. He describes the security measures as "unprecedented", with police using the most advanced armored cars and amphibious vehicles equipped with the most modern automatic weapons.

—The paper publishes on page 1 a 120-word statement signed by the Labor Party in which the party stresses its "rejection, denunciation, and strong condemnation" of the killing of "innocent Copts" in an Asyut attack. The statement stresses adherence to national unity and says that Islamic principles prohibit killing innocent people.

RECENT ARREST OF MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD MEMBERS CRITICIZED

In a 500-word article on page 12, columnist Muhammad 'Abd-al-Quddus criticizes the recent arrest of Islamists in al-Fayyum. He mocks the government for saying that the detainees were found in possession of kitchen knives and swords. Have you ever seen a terrorist fighting with a sword, he sarcastically asks readers. He says the country is experiencing police terrorism, with thousands of prisoners behind bars on only suspicion of being involved in violence. Noting that a group of people from "society's elite" are also in jail serving sentences passed by the military court last year, "although they reject violence," the writer says "the state, supported by many secularists and all those who hate Islam, is launching an all-out war against the entire Islamic trend." He urges that elite group to remain patient, telling them that "God is greater than every criminal."

—A 500-word column by Ahmad al-Suyufi on page 6 also describes as "extremely laughable" the government statement about the recent arrest of the Muslim Brotherhood group. He finds it illogical that a group of people would use knives, ropes, and leaflets to overthrow the government by force. Noting that some of the detainees are public figures who were members of the People's Assembly or local councils, al-Suyufi says people cannot take the accusations leveled at them by the government seriously. The writer says the people were happy with the recent dismissal of Major General Ahmad al-'Adili, former director of the State Intelligence Department, and the appointment of Major General Habib al-'Adili in his place. But this satisfaction was soon shattered with the arrest of new Muslim Brotherhood members, the writer says.

ARABS, MUSLIMS URGED TO INTENSIFY EFFORTS TO REGAIN JERUSALEM

In a 1,200-word article on page 12, columnist Mahjub 'Umar discusses Jerusalem as negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians over its future are drawing nearer. He maintains that the city is the capital not only of Palestine, but of all Arabs and Muslims. Pointing out that Israel is doing everything to emphasize its sovereignty over the city, the writer calls on Arabs and

Muslims, peoples and governments, to "intensify their moves and activities to support the Palestinian Arab position against the Israeli enemy." He says Arabs and Muslims must renounce all their differences, because the battle over Jerusalem has priority over all other things.

SUDAN DEFENDED AGAINST 'UNJUST' U.S. ACCUSATIONS

In a 1,500-word article on page 7, Najah al-'Ashri maintains that the "great American Satan" is preparing sanctions against Sudan because this Arab African country, under the leadership of President 'Umar al-Bashir, is pursuing an independent national policy, achieving economic self-sufficiency, and applying the Islamic shari'ah. The writer praises al-Bashir's government for restoring balance to Sudan, saving the country from collapse, and adopting "good" policies in economy and other areas. Because Sudan got rid of "hateful Western subordination," the writer says, the United States is pouring its anger over it, just as it did with Iraq and Libya. American-Western rage is directed only against Arab countries that grow militarily, economically, and politically strong, the writer says. He describes U.S. accusations against Sudan, that it supports terrorism and shelters terrorists as "unjust."

LAWYERS SYNDICATE CONTESTS SEQUESTRATION DECISION

A 900-word report by Khalid Yunus on page 8 says Cairo Appeals Court will discuss on 29 February two suits contesting a court ruling that places the Lawyers Syndicate under government custodianship. The defense will argue that the custodianship decision violates the Constitution, the law, and the ruling of the Higher Constitutional Court. It will also argue that the ruling violates international conventions on independence of the judiciary.

Political Islam Review: AL-SHA'B 1 Mar

NC0603151696

[FBIS Report] The following is a comprehensive review of all items in the 1 March edition of the Arabic language newspaper AL-SHA'B that pertain to political Islamic issues.

CONTENTS:

1. Pentagon Said Planning To Build 4 Bases in Region
2. 'Arafat Asked To Destroy Hamas, Al-Jihad
3. Selling Public Sector Companies Decried
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6. Government Urged To Abolish Press Law
7. EHRO Report Notes Increase in Human Rights Violations
8. Writer Highlights Hamas Operations Against Israelis
9. Islamic Thinker Calls For Rejuvenation of Islam
10. Al-Baz Call for Peace Culture Criticized
11. Egyptian Policy on Sudan Decried

PENTAGON SAID PLANNING TO BUILD 4 BASES IN REGION

A 260-word report on page 1 by Mahmud Bakri claims that the Pentagon prepared a plan to establish four new military bases in the Middle East.

'ARAFAT ASKED TO DESTROY HAMAS, AL-JIHAD

In a 400-word report on page 1 entitled "Israel Demands 'Arafat Ban Hamas and al-Jihad Activities; Arrests Continue," Muhammad Jamal 'Arafah says that Palestinian sources have disclosed that the list of demands the Israeli occupation authorities submitted to the 'Arafat government includes more than five demands, all focusing on the destruction of the Hamas and al-Jihad movements and banning their activities in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, and to consider Hamas as a terrorist organization. The report says that 'Arafat "responded positively" to most demands and began a campaign to detain Hamas and al-Jihad members and to seize their weapons.

SELLING PUBLIC SECTOR COMPANIES DECRIED

In a 2,300 word account on page 2, Ahmad 'Abd-al-Mun'im discusses the frenetic attempt by the government to sell the public sector companies. He notes that the organized onslaught on the public sector began in 1989. There were increasing claims at the time of losses and a drop in production and a need for reform in preparation for passing public business law 203. He says the cabinet decision to sell 59 companies shows that the goal from the start was not to reform the stumbling public sector companies but to sell them. He names companies whose losses decreased and some that even made profits when reforms were introduced. He gives examples of companies that offered shares for sale and made big profits. He argues that offering so many companies for sale at one time will not attract enough buyers, causing the prices of shares to drop and forcing the government to sell the companies at prices far less than their real worth.

WRITER VIEWS DRAFT LAWS, PRIVATIZATION

In a 2,500-word article on page 5, Dr. Muhammad Hilmi Murad discusses a new draft election law for the local councils and the privatization program. He praises Prime Minister al-Janzuri's approach of inviting political parties' representatives to meetings to learn their views on the new policies and draft laws. He says to attain the desired aim of these meetings, the government must first disseminate these draft laws and the most important points of the new policies some time before the meeting so that specialists can study them and prepare well-researched and sound views. He says that the goal of the meetings must be to discuss proposals and exchange views so that amendments can be made and the meetings will not be limited to supporting the government views and proposals.

Discussing the proposed draft law to amend the local council elections, he says the proposed amendments show that the government seeks to interfere and impose members of the provisional councils or choose public figures as members. He argues that the government law that says the appointed council members may function for nine months until new elections are held is aimed at enabling the ruling party members to consolidate their positions and ensure victory in the upcoming elections. Discussing the privatization program, he says the government must take certain principles into consideration so that the program can achieve its purpose and sell companies at the best possible prices without allowing foreigners to control our investment projects. He says the main aim of privatization is to benefit the country and to use the proceeds in lucrative investment projects and not to dispose of our companies through unsound economic decisions.

SOMALI ISLAMIC LEADERS MAKE RECONCILIATION EFFORTS

On page 5, AL-SHA'B publishes an approximately 2,200-word interview, published earlier in the Arabic newspaper AL-MUSLIMUN, with Shaykh 'Ali Ahmad Abu-Bakr, one of the leaders of the Islamic Movement in Somalia. In a brief biographic sketch, the paper notes that he graduated with a Ph. D from the Islamic University in Medina and lectured at Riyadh University. The paper notes that he is considered an enthusiast of the Somali Council for Reconciliation. Since the sedition flared up in Somalia, Shaykh Abu-Bakr and a number of Somali scholars set about forming this council after all efforts to end the crisis failed. The paper notes that through this council he and other leaders seek to bring about reconciliation among the various factions. Abu-Bakr notes that the council is closely related to the Islamic courts formed by the people in various parts of Somalia to end killing, looting, and anarchy. He says that when the central government collapsed, the Somalis resorted to establishing Islamic courts in order to ensure law and order and stop killing and looting. He says that the Islamic courts have succeeded in establishing law and order and restored life to normal in the areas where they operate. He maintains that the goal is to establish Islamic courts throughout Somalia so that law and order may be kept as a first step to normalize the situation in the country and establish peace and security.

On the same page, AL-SH'AB publishes another 1,600-word interview that was published earlier in AL-MUSLIMUN with Shaykh 'Ali Shaykh Mahmud, head of the Islamic courts in Somalia. He elaborates on the anarchy, looting, killing, and chaos that befell Somalia after the collapse of the central government. He notes that a group of ulema and leaders met and formed the Islamic courts to put an end to the anarchy and destruction in the country. He highlights the achievements made by these courts.

GOVERNMENT URGED TO ABOLISH PRESS LAW

In a 400-word boxed column on page 6 headlined "The Dialogue on the Law and the Law of Dialogue," Tal'at Rumayh terms press law 93 as "the evil law." He says that the government is holding a dialogue with the journalists on the law by bringing them to court one by one in order to subjugate them and silence their voices, which call for confronting corruption and defending the margin of democracy. He argues that the journalists are following the law of dialogue by dealing with the evil law. He claims that there is a grave danger if the officials fail to understand the significance of the journalists' commitment to dialogue as a means to abolish the evil press law. He notes that the journalists have so far pursued a democratic course to solve the crisis and not exacerbate it. He urges the government to provide a model of democracy for society, particularly because it is headed for a confrontation with the workers through its rapid steps to sell the public sector companies.

EHRO REPORT NOTES INCREASE IN HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

Page 6 carries the latest report by the Egyptian Human Rights Organization [EHRO] on the increasing violations of human rights in Egypt with the escalation of the confrontation with the armed Islamic groups. The EHRO report headlined "Prisoners Without Trial" claims that there are more than 16,000 detainees in Egyptian jails. It also notes that innocent people are repeatedly arrested and the courts' instructions to release them are systematically ignored by the authorities. The report also claims that the families of detainees are often not allowed to visit them and stresses the economic, social, and psychological effects on the prisoners and their families. The report lists the names of 35 innocent detainees and the date of their arrest.

WRITER HIGHLIGHTS HAMAS OPERATIONS AGAINST ISRAELIS

In a 1,700-word article on page 7 under the headlines "The Islamists' Attacks Inflict 110 Dead, 376 Wounded on the Zionists," "Broader Cooperation Between 'Arafat and Peres To Destroy Hamas," Muhammad Jamal 'Arafah says that when Hamas operations stopped for seven months questions were raised about the movement's weakness and the 'Arafat government's pressure on it to stop its operation. He says that the Jerusalem and Ashqelon operations turned things upside down. The operations reveal not only Hamas capabilities but also its ability to continue its "daring operations" and to defeat Israeli intelligence. He notes that 48 hours before the operations, the Zionists sealed off the Gaza Strip and the West Bank and denied the Palestinians entry into Israel. Despite all these measures, the Zionists failed to uncover Hamas' plans. He claims that the operations rendered the Zionists senseless. Their extremists assembled on the site of the explosion in Jerusalem where they tore up and burned copies of the Koran, "displaying their intense enmity toward Islam." He believes that these operations will increase Zionist repression of the Palestinians and escalate the confrontation between the 'Arafat government and the Hamas leadership. He argues that the operations might be in response to repeated Israeli statements on keeping Jerusalem as the unified capital of Israel and rejecting the establishment of a Palestinian state. He says that the operations are "a hallmark of the steadfastness of the Islamic trend in Palestine."

ISLAMIC THINKER CALLS FOR REJUVENATION OF ISLAM

In an 800-word report headlined "The Advocates of Normalization With the Zionists Are Supporters of the Western Plan," Dawud Hasan reports on a seminar on the rejuvenation of Islamic thought held recently by the ROSE AL-YUSUF magazine. He notes that Islamic thinker Muhammad 'Amarah asserted that "rejuvenation of Islamic thought has become a necessity to cope with the changes in present day life style." 'Amarah argues that Islam allows rejuvenation to cope with the changing aspects of life. He says rejuvenation means drawing lessons from the Islamic heritage and legacy and not severing ties with them. He argues that it is a rejuvenation from within the system and not going backward, because Islam is fit for all ages and places. He says that rejuvenation does not forbid openness to the West to benefit from science and knowledge, while preserving our Islamic identity. He names Islamic thinkers from the 19th century who studied in Europe and called for openness to the West's knowledge. He says he is against blind imitation and stresses that those who defend normalization with the Zionist enemy are supporters of the Western plan of which Israel is considered to be a part and are hostile to the Islamic plan.

AL-BAZ CALL FOR PEACE CULTURE CRITICIZED

In a 1,300-word article on the same page signed by "the editor" under the headline "Excuse Me Dr. Usamah al-Baz; It Is Not a Peace Culture, But a Culture of Acknowledging the Legality of the Zionist Aggression Against Our Nation," the writer says Usamah al-Baz believes in Egypt's Arab and Islamic role and in the real Zionist and U.S. designs for our region. So he was surprised to hear al-Baz at the International Book Fair seminar on 25 February express his enthusiasm about the notion of "accepting Israel's eternal existence in our land and wiping out any trace of a threat to Israel by future Arab and Islamic generations." The writer notes that this idea was endorsed by UNESCO and UNICEF at a seminar in Cairo two years ago.

He argues that the danger of this idea lies in the fact that it will open the door wide for the supporters of Zionism and U.S. goals in our country to launch a campaign for normalization with Israel. Al-Baz, he notes, represents the state when he speaks at a seminar organized by the state. He argues that the call for a peace culture ignores the fact that the basic conflict has not been resolved. He says that the normalization with Israel is still limited to the regimes. He notes that Israel still refuses to discuss its nuclear weaponry, Jerusalem, and an independent and sovereign Palestinian state. He argues that al-Baz' endorsement of this serious notion aims at entrenching the Zionist's existence in a usurped Palestine and means we are entering a danger zone. He says that despite Arab rulers' official capitulation to Israel, our Arab peoples still resist. Many of the nations' thinkers, he says, still adhere to the conviction that the Zionist entity is a passing phenomenon like all the other aggression against the nation.

EGYPTIAN POLICY ON SUDAN DECRIED

Mahfuz 'Azam, in a 1,600-word article entitled "Facts About Foreign Interference in Sudan" on the back page, says that all attempts to address the basic issues with the Egyptian regime in the past few years have failed. He says that logic and objectivity are useless in reforming Egyptian policy. Noting Egyptian media's warmongering and officials' statements against Sudan, he says there is no hope of reforming the policy of rulers surrounded by sycophants and liars. The writer says he chooses to explain the facts to the masses so they will realize the danger of the Egyptian policy toward Sudan.

He highlights remarks made by Egyptian Foreign Minister Musa and other African officials and Cairo newspapers on the nature of the dispute with Sudan. He says this hostility has arisen as a result of Sudan's Islamic orientation. He claims that the countries surrounding Sudan were given military and economic aid to open their borders to Sudanese rebels and to isolate Sudan. He says that Egyptian circles observing developments in Egyptian policy are extremely worried by that government's overt and covert policy against Sudan. This policy is "short-sighted" and fails to realize the strategic dangers behind the hostile designs to partition Sudan. He adds that the Arab League and its secretary general must act to resolve the Egyptian-Sudanese dispute and prevent the siege against Sudan. He notes that the elections will take place in Sudan on 6 March under UN and international supervision, something that we do not see happening in any of the countries surrounding Sudan.

Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Affairs: Israel Approves Palestinian Council Members' Exit

TA0703065396 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0600 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestinian Council will hold its first session since the elections at the parliament building in downtown Gaza at noon today. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that the Palestinians have invited guests from many countries to attend the opening ceremony. The Egyptian foreign minister will be one of the guests.

The Israeli defense establishment has approved the exit of council members residing in the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza despite the closure.

Palestinian Affairs: Palestinian Council Opens First Session

JN0703065496 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0600 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestinian scene will witness a great national event this morning; namely, the convocation of the first session of the Palestinian Legislative Council [PLC]. The council members will be sworn in before President Yasir 'Arafat. During the first session, the council's speakership office will be elected. It will be composed of the speaker, two deputies, and a secretary. A legal committee will be formed to draft the council's bylaws. President 'Arafat will be given two weeks to form a new council of ministers which will be presented to the PLC in the next meeting.

We draw the attention of our listeners that the Voice of Palestine will carry live the proceedings of the PLC's opening session.

[Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic at 0645 GMT on 7 March announces that it will carry live the opening session of the PLC at 0800 GMT].

Palestinian Affairs: Israel Announces Partial Lifting of Siege on Territories

JN0603195096 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1900 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli occupation authorities announced a partial lifting of the siege imposed on Palestinian territories as of 0700 tomorrow and until 1900. However, the occupation authorities are still preventing Palestinian citizens from going to work inside the Green Line in accordance with an Israeli military decision.

Palestinian Affairs: Israeli Deployments Along Borders Reported

JN0703124096 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1207 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli occupation troops reinforced their presence along the Green Line. Police and army reinforcements were deployed.

An Israeli military source said armored vehicles were deployed along the borders, and that the soldiers and border police were equipped with jeeps and all-terrain motorcycles.

Additionally, Ilan Biran, commander of the so-called Central command, ordered all units to halt their training and to mobilize all soldiers in anticipation of any emergency situation.

Palestinian Affairs: Nabulus Commander Says Pro-Hamas Palestinians Arrested

JN0603125796 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1110 GMT 6 Mar 96

[Report by Yasir 'Atilah from the "With the Midday Events" feature]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] Palestinian Police arrested dozens of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] activists in the city of Nabulus, Balata camp, and Kufr Qandil village at dawn today and transferred them to the Junayd prison in Nabulus. Brigadier General Sa'di Naji, commander of the Nabulus area, said:

[Begin recording] [Naji] We are arresting all those who are related to Hamas, those who encourage them, and those who have any knowledge of or are related in any way to the bombings which are intended to undermine the peace process. The peace process is the Palestinian people's only option these days.

['Atilah] Are these arrests carried out according to lists of wanted people?

[Naji] Yes, according to lists.

['Atilah] From which areas were they arrested?

[Naji] From all areas.

['Atilah] How many are they?

[Naji] So far they are approximately 100.

['Atilah] What kind of measures are going to be taken against them?

[Naji] First, they will be interrogated to get more information, and God willing, we will eliminate all the infrastructure that is destroying the peace process. [end recording]

Palestinian Affairs: 'Urayqat—Israeli President's Remarks 'Encourage Terrorism'

JN0603153396 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, minister of local government, has strongly criticized Israeli President Ezer Weizman's statements that the hay stack should be burned in order to find the needle, as he put it. By saying so, Weizman was instigating the Israelis to carry out retaliatory acts against Palestinian citizens. Dr. 'Urayqat said that these statements represent terrorism at state level. He added that the Palestinian Authority will not remain silent over these statements, which do not suit a president, because they encourage terrorism and bloodshed.

Palestinian Affairs: Information Ministry Denounces Israeli Measures

JN0603180296 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Ministry of Information today denounced Israeli measures and collective punishment and considered them a violation of international norms and laws, which ban collective punishment against groups and peoples.

A Ministry of Information statement says that the comprehensive war declared by the Israeli Government against Hamas and the Islamic Jihad movements extended to include the Palestinian people by besieging and strangling their cities, villages, and camps and closing down their educational institutions.

The statement says: At a time when our Palestinian people are asserting their adherence to the peace option, occupation forces are carrying out raids and arrest campaigns and the settlers are organizing attacks against the citizens, destroying their cars, and blocking their roads.

The statement warns the Israeli Government that escalating collective punishment and stealing and settling on the land cannot end the suicide operations. The statement notes that continuing on the road to peace, reinforcing the elements of confidence, the mutual recognition of rights, and respect for the will of the people who are extending their hands to make the peace of the brave will be able to end the cycle of violence and give momentum to the peace process.

Palestinian Affairs: Al-Husayni on Suicide Operations, Israeli Positions

TA0603180396 Ramallah AL-AYYAM in Arabic 4 Mar 96 p 3

[Interview with Faysal al-Husayni, official in charge of the Jerusalem file in the Palestinian Authority, by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [AL-AYYAM] What, in your opinion, are the goals of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] from the recent suicide operations? Do they actually fall within the framework of acts of resistance to the occupation?

[Al-Husayni] This operation is not only against the Israelis or the peace process, but primarily against the Palestinian people, their interests, and their national rights. This operation will be exploited by other forces that want to reduce the possibilities of a solution on the Palestinian level. Those who decided on these operations want to give others a chance to regain their control over the Palestinian people. These people seek to hinder the steps we have recently taken in an intensive manner toward a better future for our people and children.

[AL-AYYAM] In your view, what measures should the National Authority [NA] adopt to confront the current situation?

[Al-Husayni] We have to consider the supreme interest of the Palestinian people as our priority. The NA should adopt all measures to prevent any attempt to create dual authorities. The NA should strike with an iron fist at anyone who tries to create such dual authorities or who seeks to undermine and reduce the NA's capabilities. It is necessary to disarm these people and eliminate all armed manifestations. The NA must impose itself in a greater manner.

[AL-AYYAM] Do you believe that the motive of the Hamas leaderships that decided on these operations was retaliation for the assassination of Engineer Yahya 'Ayyash, or do you see other dimensions?

[Al-Husayni] Undoubtedly, there are goals other than retaliation for the assassination of Yahya 'Ayyash. Those who planned this crime calculated the results that would stem from it. Clearly, the goal of the planners of these operations is to impede the peace process between the Palestinians and Israelis at its current stage. They want to poison the climate and facilitate the coming to power in Israel of extreme right-wing elements and circles that clearly express their wish to turn back the clock. We have begun hearing voices from Israeli right-wing circles that are frankly calling for the adoption of hot pursuit. This means the entry of Israeli forces into the Palestinian areas to pursue those who carry out these operations.

[AL-AYYAM] What is your comment on the Israeli Government's policies and its reaction toward the NA and the Palestinian people in the wake of these operations?

[Al-Husayni] Some of these measures can be tolerated for a short period of time as measures adopted in a crisis, but for these measures — closures, sieges, and blockades — to become a routine policy is something that cannot be tolerated. If the Israelis want a complete separation between us and them, so be it. In return, however, they should open our borders with Egypt and Jordan and give us the chance to live. They should give us the chance to form our society and live the way we want. If they want a separation between us and them, let us immediately start discussing the arrangements of this matter.

I see in the Israeli Government's current behavior the reaction of a scared person who does not know what to do because of the right wing's pressure. Some are now calling for a national unity government in Israel in order to bring the right wing to power and tell them: "Try your security and military solutions."

I call on the Israeli Government to adopt more sensible positions and refrain from destroying the relationship with its partners in the peace process.

Palestinian Affairs: Sha'th Says Statement on Hamas, Jordan 'Out of Context'

JN0603203296 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1900 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Commenting on a report published by the French newspaper LE MONDE and some Jordanian newspapers, Dr. Nabil Sha'th, member of the Legislative Council, said the report published by LE MONDE citing him about Jordan was not accurate. He added that the report was published out of context while discussing the historic leadership of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and its role in the recent events.

Dr. Sha'th praised the special relationship between the twin Jordanian and Palestinian people. He said he confirmed this and translated it on the ground during his meeting with Jordanian Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti in Amman recently and during the visit of the Jordanian interior minister, heading a high-level Jordanian delegation to Gaza, to meet with President 'Arafat and the Palestinian leadership. The purpose of the visit was to achieve full cooperation and coordination in dealing with all negative phenomena resulting from the recent bloody operations and the siege imposed against the Palestinian territories.

Palestinian Affairs: PA Police Detain 5 of 13 Fugitives Requested by Israel

TA0703081796 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestinian Authority [PA] has so far detained five fugitives out of the list of 13 names supplied to Yasir 'Arafat by Chief of Staff Shahaq. The five include 'Awwad Silmi and Yusuf al-Malihi. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that these two men had been detained by the Palestinian Police in the past, tried, and sent away for long prison terms, but released after short periods.

'Awwad Silmi was one of the murderers of Colonel Me'ir Mintz, and Yusuf al-Malihi was an accomplice in the murder of Gil Revah and Shlomo Qapah in Ramla in 1994.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam To Hand Over Weapons to PA

JN0603143496 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1400 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam Battalions, the military wing of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], announced in a statement today that it will hand over its weapons and explosives to the Palestinian Authority [PA].

Palestinian Affairs: Hamas Military Wing Hands Over 'All Its Weapons' to PA

JN0603152296 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The military wing of Hamas [Islamic Resistance] Movement today announced it handed over all its weapons to the Palestinian Authority [PA].

The military wing of Hamas issued a statement yesterday in which it declared a halt to all operations against Israelis, in response to a request by the political wing of the Hamas Movement.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam Statement on Disarming Detailed

NC0603142996 Paris AFP in English 1424 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Gaza City, Gaza Strip, March 6 (AFP)—The armed wing of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) announced Wednesday [6 March] that it would surrender its explosives and most of its other weapons to Yasir 'Arafat's Palestinian Authority.

The underground movement 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam said in a statement issued here that its decision was in line with demands put forward by 'Arafat and decisions taken by Hamas political leaders following four suicide bombings in Israel which killed 60 people.

The communique said the 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades would "halt as of today all our military activities in and outside the Gaza Strip in order to begin a new era of political activity, to respond to the aspirations of our people and to take part in building our nation."

"Our armed wing and our militants (wanted by Israel) will apply for licenses to hold the weapons needed for self-defence and will hand the rest over to the Palestinian National Authority," it said. "We are going to turn in all explosives and explosives-making material to the leaders of the Palestinian Authority who can keep or destroy them," it added. "We call on all factions to respect these instructions," it said. "If anyone violates them, they will be automatically excluded."

Several written statements signed by Hamas and 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam over the past two weeks have offered to halt military activities, but this was the first announcement that the group was willing to disarm. Israel responded to the earlier announcements with great skepticism in that some were issued prior to the latest bombings which may have been carried out by Islamic radicals not controlled by the central Hamas or al-Qassam leadership.

The latest announcement called on the Israeli Government "to respond positively to our position and not commit new crimes like that against Yahya 'Ayyash," the Hamas bomb-maker killed in January by presumed Israeli agents. "Our decision is serious and aimed at avoiding a new bloodbath," it continued. "We ask our brothers in the Palestinian Authority to demand that Israel remove the names of our militants from their lists of people to kill, because violence can only lead to more violence."

Wednesday's statement came as Israel and the Palestinian Authority pursued a vast campaign of arrests and other measures designed to disable Hamas following four suicide bombings since February 25. Since the attacks began, Israel has put strong pressure on Arafat and the Palestinian Authority to crack down on the Islamic radicals.

Palestinian police have arrested nearly 600 activists of HAMAS and the smaller Islamic Jihad group since the attacks began, while Israeli police have detained more than 100 in territory under their control. Earlier this week the two authorities began going after the important Hamas network of educational and social organizations.

Palestinian Affairs: Al-Qassam Units' Leaflet Calls For Disarming, Cease—Fire

TA0603165596 Jerusalem JMCC PRESS SERVICE in English 1616 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Following is a translation of the latest al-Qassam Units leaflet:

A leaflet issued by the "wanted" 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam Units members to our people in the Gaza Strip:

In light of the recent succession of events, and in concern for the higher interests of our people, and in order to prevent the spilling of Palestinian blood and internal strife; and in keeping with decisions reached by the Palestinian National Authority and its leader, Mr. Yasir 'Arafat, and the requests made by Hamas' [Islamic Resistance Movement] political leadership, the wanted al-Qassam Units members have decided upon the following:

Firstly: to stop all military activity, beginning with the date of this leaflet, within and outside the Gaza Strip, and begin a new phase of political resistance in order to realize the goals of our people, and to use positive resistance methods in order to participate in the building of this nation.

Secondly: Our military wing and wanted members will license all the weapons they need for self defense, and hand in what is left over to the Palestinian National Authority.

Thirdly: We will hand over explosives and explosive-manufacturing machinery to the Palestinian National Authority leadership, so that they may be destroyed or stored, as best benefits national interest.

Fourthly: the wanted members will gradually begin returning to normal life, and will respect the laws of the only authority in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the National Authority.

Fifthly: We call upon all units to strictly obey the provisions of this communique, and any deviations will be considered deviations from the will of the majority of the wanted members.

Finally: We call upon the government of Israel to positively respond to this stand of ours, and not repeat the crime it committed by assassinating the Engineer Yahya 'Ayyash, because we are serious in our decision, and in our desire to stop bloodshed. We call upon our brothers in the National Authority to pressure the other side (Israel) into erasing its lists of wanted activists it intends to assassinate, because violence only generates increased violence.

We ask God to spare the Palestinians internal fighting, that which is apparent and that which is concealed. God is with us and victory is the ally of the believers. [Signed] The 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam Units, Palestine, 6.3.1996

Palestinian Affairs: Al-Qassam Battalions Statement on Disarming Reported

JN0703071596 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0600 GMT 7 Mar 96 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A statement issued by the al-Qassam Battalions announced a halt to all military activities as of today in response to the decisions by the Palestinian National Authority [PNA] under President Yasir 'Arafat. The battalions announced the beginning of a new phase of political struggle, pursuing methods of positive opposition to contribute to building the country.

The statement said that the Battalion's military apparatus will license the arms it will need and hand over the remainder to the PNA. It will also hand over explosives and means of manufacturing them to the PNA leadership. The statement said that the al-Qassam Battalions will respect the PNA laws. It appealed to all units to abide by this announcement.

Palestinian Affairs: Hamas Denies Connection to Last Week's Leaflets

TA0703123296 Jerusalem JMCC PRESS SERVICE in English 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A leaflet signed by the main Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] political body, carrying today's date, held that the jumble of communiques signed by the 'Ayyash Units and al-Qassam Units distributed over the past two weeks were not authentic, adding they were "a part of a conspiracy." The leaflet also referred to "combating the new Zionist war."

Following are excerpts from the communique:

"The issuing of leaflets on behalf of Hamas and under different names is a part of the conspiracy aimed at confusing the public, through a negative portrayal of Hamas and its heroic Jihad against occupation, and aimed at undermining Hamas's stands, stands which the public is well aware of.

"Hamas offers its condolences for the Palestinians who were killed by mistake when the mujahidin carried out the latest orders (in reference to the one Palestinian who was killed during the 25 February attack in Jerusalem and the two killed in the Jaffa Street bus explosion in Jerusalem on 3 March), and offers its sincerest condolences to their families, and its assurance that Hamas will treat them as its treats the families of its own martyrs.

"Hamas asks the people to foil the Occupation authorities' designs by displaying the true strength of the will and patience of the Palestinian people, and its ability to offer even more sacrifices in support of the will of the mujahidin to combat the new Zionist war...."

[Signed] The Islamic Resistance Movement — Hamas.

Palestinian Affairs: Iran Said Controlling Hamas From Outside

TA0503180096 Jerusalem AL-MANAR in Arabic 4 Mar 96 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Arab diplomatic sources have affirmed that there is a sharp split in Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] that could paralyze the movement and remove it from the circle of action in the arena. These sources say that the movement is divided into three groups: The first is subordinate to the Iranian Revolutionary Guards and carries out their orders. This group serves the interests of certain regimes and is funded by them. The second group is searching for funds and has found its desire in Khartoum where the strings of radical Islamic forces are stretched. The leaders of this group meet with elements residing in Afghanistan and Khartoum. This group is now operating under the orders of mercenary extremist forces which perpetrate acts of violence in a number of Arab and Islamic states. As for the third group, it is composed of the movement's sons in the West Bank and Gaza Strip who have realized the need to deal with the new situation in the arena. This group is being subjected to immense pressure by the other two groups, but most of its members are rejecting the pressure and insisting on continuing the dialogue with the National Authority [NA] and participating in the process of construction and revival imposed by the peace process.

The sources said that Hamas in the Palestinian arena no longer adheres to its hardline mentality and that what activates some of its groups are the Iranian intelligence service and the leaders of Hizballah in Lebanon. There is an inside Hamas and an outside Hamas. This is liable to dissolve the movement and turn it into a political party in the Palestinian arena that lives among its followers, who constitute a small number in the Palestinian arena. The moderation of the Hamas wing inside has irritated Hamas' leaders abroad who have lost a base of support.

The informed sources said that the moderate Hamas leaders in the Palestinian arena have been threatened with elimination by the hardliners abroad, but they rejected these threats. They informed the NA about the threats and precautions were taken to safeguard their lives. Moreover, the NA promised to protect them.

These sources add that the position of the inside Hamas angered the outside leaders, who are supported by Tehran, radical movements in Afghanistan and Sudan, and figures who reside in Europe and supervise the funding of extremist movements that wreak havoc in various arenas, such as Algeria and Egypt. Recently, the outside leaders have resorted to carrying out acts of violence against Israeli targets as a means of attracting attention and in an attempt to promote a dialogue with the Israeli Government and present themselves as the party with which Israel can negotiate.

The informed sources believe that these operations aim to embarrass the NA and President Yasir 'Arafat and portray Hamas as being still unified and having an impact. The sources revealed that Hamas leaders abroad are setting up small cells as a military wing that will carry out the orders of these leaders, who have found themselves outside the circle of action. The have urged the escalation of acts of violence to cover up the beginning of their decline, the secrecy of their dependence, and their cooperation with certain intelligence services in the region.

The sources add that the leaders of this wing run their affairs through companies and plush offices in European and Arab capitals. They lead a life of opulence with their families. The sources say that the leaders of this wing are seeking to conduct a dialogue with Israel and appease it. Therefore, they are trying to impose this through secret contacts between Hamas and Israel. Some of the meetings have taken place through the mediation of the leaders of settlers.

The informed sources concluded that the hardline Hamas is living its last days and that the hardliners have turned into puppets in the hands of the Iranian Revolution Guards and the international terror gang that practices violence in Afghanistan and elsewhere.

The sources interpret the recent acts of violence as the last throes of death, meaning that the violence seeks to undermine the Palestinian people's future and the peace process and embarrass the NA and President Yasir 'Arafat in a bid to make the radical wing — supported by Iran — a party in the dialogue and a means for launching a dialogue with Tehran through those who have deviated from the Palestinian people's will and decision.

The sources disclosed a plan by Hamas hardliners living in European and Arab capitals. The plan is summarized in the following clauses:

1. Perpetrating terrorist operations in the Palestinian and Israeli arenas and flaring up the situation in this region.

2. Exploiting the Israeli response to these operations and the continuation of closure, siege, and starvation in a bid to turn back the clock.

3. Embarrassing the NA by forcing Israel to hold it responsible for the continuation of these acts of violence.

4. Opening the way to dialogue between Tel Aviv and other capitals through those hardliners.

5. Pushing the Palestinians toward infighting and turning the Palestinian arena into Algeria and a second Afghanistan.

6. Undermining the Palestinian people's economic aspirations and preventing the donor countries and investors from working in the Palestinian arena.

7. Undermining the future of the Palestinian people and starving them.

8. Giving an opportunity to the forces of extremism in Israel to implement their schemes against the Palestinian people and supporting the right-wing, particularly as the election campaign is approaching.

The sources said that the policies of this Hamas group are drawn up and reviewed in Afghanistan, Khartoum, and the offices of Hizballah. The highlight of the new policy aims at turning the Palestinian arena into Algeria and a second Afghanistan. A report drawn up by more than one Arab quarter affirms that the Palestinian arena differs from other arenas in characteristics and tendencies. This arena rejects terrorist schemes and attempts to split the people. The Palestinians have spoken about their future. They support the peace process and their president, Yasir 'Arafat. Consequently, the extremists will not be able to implement their goals. Hence, the A will be able to foil all these plots. This authority, which is supported by its people, will not allow anyone to turn back the clock.

The sources added that secret meetings have been held between the movement's leaders abroad and officers of the Iranian Revolution Guards, the Iranian intelligence service, and Hizballah elements. Other meetings were held with hardline leaders who operate from various arenas in Khartoum and Afghanistan. The sources say that in these meetings Tehran ordered Hamas to begin implementing a terrorist scheme to undermine the aspirations of the Palestinian people and their leadership and open the way between Tehran and Tel Aviv.

On the other hand, the sources revealed that meetings have been held between hardline Hamas leaders and radical Jewish elements in European capitals and the United States under the auspices of some intelligence services.

Palestinian Affairs: Hamas Says Israel Must Stop Repressing Palestinians

JN0603130896 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] We received a statement through the fax today signed by the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, announcing its readiness to deal positively with any political endeavor to safeguard the Palestinian people's rights.

The statement explains that if Israel insists on pursuing its repressive measures and war against Hamas and the Palestinian people, the movement has the necessary means to pursue its programs.

Hamas also called on all the governments of Islamic and Arab countries not to respond to the Israeli campaign against the Hamas movement and its supporters.

Palestinian Affairs: Accused Hamas Member—Attacks 'Inappropriate'

JN0603165296 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1208 GMT 6 Mar 96

[Interview with Muhammad Abu-Wardah, member of the Hamas military wing "who is accused of planning the two bombing operations in Jerusalem and Ashqelon," by Yusuf al-Qazzaz on 5 March; place not given—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [al-Qazzaz] Can you please identify yourself?

[Abu-Wardah] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. My name is Muhammad 'Atiyah Mahmud Abu-Wardah from al-Fawwar Camp in the Hebron District. I am 20 years old. I am a student at the Teacher Institute in Ramallah in my third year studying elementary education.

[Al-Qazzaz] Brother Muhammad, can you tell us about your relationship with al-Qassam Battalions?

[Abu-Wardah] I am a member of the 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam Battalions, which played a major role in carrying out the recent martyrdom-seeking operations in Jerusalem, Ashqelon, and Tel Aviv. I convinced the three persons who were martyred to take part in carrying out the martyrdom operations to act as human bombs. Those people are Majdi Abu-Wardah from al-Fawwar Camp, Ibrahim al-Sarahinah from al-Fawwar Camp, and Ra'd al-Sharnubi from Burqa in Nabulus.

[Al-Qazzaz] When you say martyrdom operations, you mean suicide operations?

[Abu-Wardah] We view them as martyrdom operations.

[Al-Qazzaz] But the person who carries out such operations does that by committing suicide.

[Abu-Wardah] It may be viewed by people in general as a person who commits suicide. However, the inner conviction of this person is that he is going on a martyrdom operation.

[Al-Qazzaz] This is his inner conviction, as you say, or your own conviction. However, it is suicide, which is prohibited by Islam.

[Abu-Wardah] I express my reservations over this view.

[Al-Qazzaz] Anyway, perhaps you have heard or read that Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] leaders condemned and rejected these operations. What is your own conviction?

[Abu-Wardah] We trust the leadership of the Hamas Movement. They know better.

[Al-Qazzaz] Do you know that these operations resulted in closure, arrests, and demolition of homes. Any Palestinian citizen is now threatened that he might be shot. You have contributed to punishments against the Palestinian people.

[Abu-Wardah] Perhaps there was no correct assessment of the situation or, for example, of what the operations could produce, in terms of positive or negative results. Of course, it is now clear after carrying out these operations that the Palestinian people are angry at the operations at the current stage, in which there is a peace process. Of course, when anyone does anything, this thing may produce either a positive or negative effect. It is possible that this person has no determination or farsightedness regarding such an issue. Therefore, he might do these things.

[Al-Qazzaz] You know, or perhaps you don't, that Palestinians were killed in these operations.

[Abu-Wardah] We say may God have mercy on them all because it is all an act of God. People are bound to experience what was predetermined for them.

[Al-Qazzaz] Suppose you heard that one of your cousins was killed in these operations, what would your reaction be?

[Abu-Wardah] Of course I will be sad....

[Al-Qazzaz, interrupting] Let me tell you something. You know that there is a peace process between us and Israel. You are also aware that elections were held recently. Has the Palestinian popular decision not affected your convictions?

[Abu-Wardah] Every person has his own convictions. The Palestinian people are civilized. There is now a kind of democracy. Therefore, every person has his own views. However, regarding what is happening in this stage and the operations, I am now totally convinced that the actions we carried out harm the interests of the Palestinian people and — in view of the presence of the National Authority — affect them negatively.

[Al-Qazzaz] Would you tell us more about your relationship with Majdi Abu-Wardah, Ibrahim al-Sarahinah, and Ra'd al-Sharnubi?

[Abu-Wardah] Brother Majdi Abu-Wardah, may God have mercy on his soul, is a cousin and our relationship is that of cousins. We are brothers in God and he was a dear brother. I ask Almighty God to have mercy on him.

[Al-Qazzaz] Muhammad Abu-Wardah, what would you like to say to the youths who are still convinced in the acts they are carrying out and the acts which were carried out by Majdi Abu-Wardah, al-Sarahinah, and others?

[Abu-Wardah] I am fully convinced that such acts and martyrdom-seeking operations at this stage facing the Palestinian people and the National Authority are inappropriate now. They must stop these acts until the National Authority assesses the situation. The brothers who carry out such acts should see if there is any benefit for the Palestinian people in these acts. As they have noticed, the occupation authorities are tightening measures on the Palestinian people in all walks of life, such as (?water) and other things. This will not please any person who loves the Palestinian people and homeland. I call on our brothers in the 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam Battalions and the Disciples of Yahya 'Ayyash to stop any armed action and to halt combat operations immediately.

[Al-Qazzaz] Who recruited you in the al-Qassam Battalions?

[Abu-Wardah] I was recruited by my brothers in the shop who were arrested by the National Authority.

[Al-Qazzaz] Muhammad Abu-Wardah, I want to ask you the following: As a Palestinian citizen, do you regret what you did?

[Abu-Wardah] As I said at the beginning, [words indistinct] the internal bases of the Hamas Movement [words indistinct] there was no farsightedness or assessment of such military acts. He was involved in this because he was fully convinced of this.

[Al-Qazzaz] Muhammad, since you had a relationship with those youths, why did you not carry out the suicide operation?

[Abu-Wardah] A matter like this means moving from one life to another. So, it was difficult for me. This needs someone who is prepared for such a thing and who has fulfilled all his commitments. This is difficult; it needs a person who can abandon all things in life so that he can go to the other life.

[Al-Qazzaz] Are you still convinced of these operations which have caused damage to the Palestinian people?

[Abu-Wardah] I told you that I am fully convinced that what we are doing is against the interests of the Palestinian people and harms our people at this stage. Therefore, I call on our brothers (?and beloved ones) in the 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam Battalions to stop these operations to give the National Authority the opportunity to carry out its role, particularly since the National Authority is in the process of evaluating things and trying to straighten out matters.

[Al-Qazzaz] Do you still have anything to say to your colleagues?

[Abu-Wardah] I say to them again: Stop, halt the military operations at the present time. As I said, give the Palestinian National Authority, which is recognized by the world, a chance to play its role and straighten out matters in the interest of the Palestinian homeland and people.

Palestinian Affairs: Abu-Wardah—Operations Aimed at Wrecking Peace Process

TA0603192696 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 6 Mar 96

[Interview with Muhammad Abu-Wardah, "handler of the suicide bombers in Jerusalem and Ashqelon," by Yoram Kohen at the Palestinian interrogation facility in Jericho on 6 March; recorded in Arabic with Hebrew subtitles; translated from the Arabic]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Kohen] Have you been a member of 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam for a long time?

[Abu-Wardah] About four weeks.

[Kohen] Only four weeks?

[Abu-Wardah] Yes.

[Kohen] How did you arrange the operations in Jerusalem and Ashqelon?

[Abu-Wardah] The military apparatus asked me to train people to carry out suicide operations. In the first operation — the Jerusalem and Ashqelon operation — they asked me to train two persons. I brought these two persons to carry out the suicide operations. This was the order. The same thing happened to the third operation, which was in Jerusalem.

[Kohen] You prepared the three persons for these operations?

[Abu-Wardah] Yes.

[Kohen] Who were they? Ibrahim Sarahinah?

[Abu-Wardah] Ibrahim Sarahinah, Majdi Abu-Wardah, and Ra'd al-Sharnubi.

[Kohen] Who asked you to carry out this operation?

[Abu-Wardah] As I told you, the military apparatus.

[Kohen] Was it Muhi-al-Din Sharif?

[Abu-Wardah] No, someone called Abu-Ahmad.

[Kohen] Did you have connections with Muhi-al-Din Sharif?

[Abu-Wardah] No, only with one person named Abu-Ahmad.

[Kohen] Where did you meet with Abu-Ahmad?

[Abu-Wardah] We used to meet in Ramallah. [passage omitted]

[Kohen] When Abu-Ahmad asked you to carry out the operation, what did he tell you?

[Abu-Ahmad] The idea was to stage military operations so that they would realize their goal in the political arena; namely, to wreck the peace process because it did not serve their purposes. Moreover, in view of political circumstances in the Israeli arena, such as the Israeli elections, they sought to escalate military operations so that the political arena would turn upside down in terms of the Likud and the left wing, in particular, as the elections were advanced. Consequently, they believed that the impact of the military operations would benefit the Likud against the left wing.

[Kohen] So they wanted to destroy the peace process?

[Abu-Wardah] They believed that if the right wing succeeded, the peace process would be derailed.

Palestinian Affairs: Al-Rujub Denies Coaching Abu-Wardah on Hamas Goals

TA0703120396 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1100 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Jibril al-Rujub, head of the Palestinian Preventive Security [PPS] apparatus, said today that after Israel decided to disband the Knesset in anticipation of the elections, terrorist organizations decided to intensify their anti-Israeli activity. Al-Rujub told our correspondent Gay Zohar that there is a link between the terrorist attacks and the Israeli elections. He categorically rejected the allegation that the PPS had coached Abu-Wardah, the recruiter of suicide attackers, to state that Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] has been acting to replace the Israeli regime.

[Begin recording] [al-Rujub] He said what he thought was true. We do not care what happens between Labor and the Likud; that is no business of ours, it is a domestic Israeli issue, and we are not interfering in it.

[Zohar] Didn't you tell Abu-Wardah what to say?

[Al-Rujub] Listen, we don't tell Abu-Wardah or anyone else what to say. I am telling you the truth: I think some people implicated this kid in a business in which he does not believe.

[Zohar] What do you mean?

[Al-Rujub] Well, first they asked him to be a middleman, and he refused. When they said he was a traitor, he said: Okay, I'll talk other people into doing it. And he did just that: He sent a cousin who sent a friend who sent a friend. [end recording]

Palestinian Affairs: Hamas Military Activists Said To Go Underground in Gaza

TA0703114296 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 7 Mar 96 p 5

[Report by David Regev and Hayim Shibi]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The heads of the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] military arm in the Gaza Strip have gone underground over the last few days and cannot be located. Palestinian sources say they have done so out of the fear that the Israeli Shin Bet is out to liquidate them.

Palestinian sources yesterday said that following the special cabinet session and the establishment of the Supreme Counterterror Command in the wake of the Dizengoff attack, Hamas military arm activists and their collaborators have gone underground and cannot be found on Gaza streets. The sources say the members of the military arm fear they will be assassinated by Israel. "They are afraid they will be assassinated like Yahya 'Ayyash. Israeli ministers declared that the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] will operate anywhere in a bid to get them, and they realize that anywhere means the Gaza Strip as well," the sources said. It has been learned that the members of the military arm are taking stringent measures to protect themselves. They even cut-off their ties with many collaborators, fearing they may be handed over to Israel just as happened in the 'Ayyash case, according to Palestinian sources. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs: Abu-Mazin Comments on Steps To Be Taken Against Hamas

TA0703121496 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 7 Mar 96 pp 1, 2

[Report by David [illegible]kovsky]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Palestinian Authority [PA] "is determined to root out every bit of infrastructure" and "demolish the vicious organizations" of the terrorists who stage attacks against Israelis, Mahmud 'Abbas [Abu-Mazin], PA Chairman Yasir 'Arafat's top deputy, said in a rare interview last night in Gaza with THE JERUSALEM POST and HA'ARETZ.

'Abbas insisted the PA has been "betrayed" by Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], which the PA mistakenly hoped would evolve into a democratic opposition party. "There will be no dialogue with either of them (the political wing of Hamas and the 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam military wing). We will go after the 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam. You cannot trust them. President 'Arafat said you cannot trust those people, and that they betrayed us," he said.

'Arafat has been charged by Israel and others with failing to make a strategic choice between its agreement with Israel and its desire to remain on good terms with Islamic militants. 'Abbas's remarks seemed designed to say that the PA is now making its choice.

'Abbas insisted Iran is funding Hamas, saying: "I believe Iran is behind them and giving them aid. Iran is responsible for these acts." But he said he did not think this freed the PA of its responsibility to eliminate these groups.

'Abbas named "five key operational decision-makers" in 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam arrested by the PA in Gaza during the last few days: Yusuf Abu-'Ayn, Muhammad Khawajah, Haydar 'Abbas, 'Awwad Salimi, and 'Atif Hamdan. Eleven of the 13 suspects whose names were handed over by Israel remain at large, and the PA is still searching for key terrorists Muhammad Dayf, Muhi-al-Din al-Sharif, 'Adnan al-Ghul, and Hasan Tahaynah, he added. He suggested there could be some surprise developments in the fight against terror during the next few days.

He insisted that not all terrorists will be extradited to Israel, but will be tried by PA special military courts, just as Muhammad Mustafa Abu-Wardah was convicted and sentenced yesterday to life imprisonment. "For those who are guilty of these crimes of terror, no pardon will be given," he said. "They have betrayed our people. Time and again they have broken their assurances to us. Enough is enough."

He said the PA would work with Israel to get rid of terrorists, adding that 'Arafat said Israeli security forces could even accompany the PA security in raids against terror targets in cities controlled by the PA, such as Ramallah. However, 'Abbas warned against Israel taking any unilateral action in A areas, saying this would have dire consequences for peace. "This means reoccupying. This means you could lose the peace process itself. I think this will be very dangerous. (Instead), they should coordinate with our forces," he said.

'Abbas repeatedly warned against closing off the territories. While expressing understanding for short-term moves, he voiced concern that it could be "counterproductive," as it would increase Palestinian poverty and turn away people from the peace process. He said 'Arafat had spoken with Islamic religious leaders in Gaza on Tuesday [5 March] about issuing a fatwa (religious edict) stressing that terror attacks against civilians are against Islam.

Asked how 'Arafat's participation in the funeral of Hamas bombmaker Yahya 'Ayyash had contributed to a climate among the Palestinians against violence, he said this sort of gesture by 'Arafat "would not be repeated." However, he sought to explain the move as deflecting building public pressure inside Gaza following the assassination.

In response to a question whether he endorsed 'Arafat's view that a right-wing cabal existed in Israel that was cooperating with Hamas, 'Abbas suggested asking 'Arafat himself. He said it sufficed to say the peace process has many opponents, but refused to say they are cooperating.

Regarding convening the Palestine National Council [PNC] to change the PLO Covenant, 'Abbas said the meeting would be held during the last 10 days of April or in May, and that all references calling for Israel's destruction will be eliminated. 'Abbas insisted that he had an agreement with Israel that all members and alternate members of the PNC could return to the territories not just for the vote but also to live. The joint interview last night was held at the UN special coordinator Terje Larsen's office in Gaza. It was the result of consultations yesterday between Larsen, US Consul General in Jerusalem Ed Abington, and top PA officials, and was approved by 'Arafat, who designated 'Abbas to speak on behalf of the PA. The interview was held without any restrictions.

Palestinian Affairs: Hamas Delegation Visit to South Africa Criticized

NC0603195596 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1805 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Johannesburg, 6 Mar (MENA)—Palestinian Ambassador to South Africa Salman al-Harfi said that the visit to South Africa by a delegation from the pro-Iranian extremist wing in Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] will not serve the Middle East peace process.

In statements he made today to the MENA correspondent in South Africa, the ambassador said that Iranian hands are trying to tamper with the Palestinian people's interests by exploiting some extremist elements in Hamas which share with the extreme right in Israel the same idea of undermining the peace process in the region.

He added that some Hamas elements were dismayed when the overwhelming majority of the Palestinian people opted for the peace process as expressed in the sweeping majority vote for President Yasir 'Arafat in recent elections. They have sought an alliance with extremist circles, foremost of them Iran, in order to terrorize the Palestinian people and destroy the peace process.

He noted that he has conveyed this view to South African officials and said that he has received a promise that this matter will be discussed at the highest levels on the basis that such a visit will not serve South Africa's higher interests.

Al-Harfi said that the Palestinian National Authority and the PLO are in touch with the Hamas political leadership, adding that the recent dialogue between the two sides resulted in convincing Hamas to issue a statement in which it pledged to abandon violence on the premise that violence does not serve the Palestinian people's interests.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Receives U.S. Consul, Russian Official

JN0603135396 Gaza Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation Television Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 6 Mar 96

[Announcer-read report over video]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat received U.S. Consul-General Edward Abington today. The two sides reviewed the latest developments in the region in light of recent events.

President 'Arafat also received the director of the Russian Foreign Ministry's Middle East Department with whom he discussed the latest developments in the region, the military siege imposed on the Palestinian territories, and the recent Israeli decisions.

Palestinian Affairs: Opposition Official Views Clinton's Position on Bombing

NC0603212996 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 6 Mar 96

[Telephone interview with Abu-Khalid al-'Imlah, assistant secretary of Fatah—the Uprising, by Mahdi Hasan; place and date not given—recorded, from the "News and Reports" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Hasan] Abu-Khalid, as you know, in his comment on the recent martyrdom-seeking operations in the occupied territories, U.S. President Bill Clinton said that the operations are uncivilized acts. You remember that Bill Clinton himself viewed the enemy's terrorist crime of assassinating Dr. Fathi al-Shaqaqi, former secretary general of the Islamic Jihad, as a legitimate act. What is your comment on this U.S. double standard?

[Al-'Imlah] Like all U.S. presidents, Bill Clinton has his own standards, which, necessarily, conflict with claims of concern about human rights and democracy. They take positions based on their own interests, not on human principles. There is nothing strange in Clinton's statements about these heroic operations, which, essentially, are acts of self-defense, acts to defend honor, the homeland, the dignity, history, and the future. This nation and these martyrs recognize the designs made by Clinton and the Zionists against Palestine, the Arab world, and the region. They cannot be deceived by the peace they are talking about. Our people, our strugglers, our mujahidin did not practice aggression against anyone. By all human, international, religious, and national standards, they are defending themselves and their rights.

It is the West that practiced aggression against the Jews. Arabs and Muslims never practiced aggression or endangered the Jews. It was the colonialist West that created the Jewish problem. Why are they asking us to pay the price of their mistakes? This is our territory, our sanctities, and our homeland. When martyrs die on the land of Palestine, they are defending themselves. As for them [the Israelis], they are gangs from all over the world who came to our country to kill and disperse the Palestinian people. They came to kill Palestinian leaders, old men, women, and children in Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Egypt, and the entire Arab homeland. These are the terrorists, the criminals. The Zionist entity, the Zionist movement, and the U.S. Administration know no values except to the extent they are in harmony with their interests.

These are their standards. But we are defending our right. We proceed from the fact that Palestine is our country, our homeland, and they are the aggressors. Therefore, this policy of martyrdom will not stop as long as they continue to occupy any part of our land in Palestine or in the Arab homeland.

Palestinian Affairs: Police Withdraw as al-Husayni Calls Off Orient House Rally

TA0603145396 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The police have opened the vicinity of Orient House in East Jerusalem and withdrawn its troops after Faysal al-Husayni promised not to hold the Palestinian rally he had planned. The policemen, who had blocked the area at noon, allowed journalists to enter the building. Our correspondent Esti Perez reports that al-Husayni denounced Israel's actions, and then informed the policemen that he would not hold the rally. The police operated in the Orient House area in accordance with an order issued by Internal Security Minister Moshe Shahal.

Algeria

Algeria: Car Bomb Explodes in Berrouaghia, Kills 2

LD0703111796 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in French 1000 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A truck bomb has exploded near the town hall in Berrouaghia, in the province of Media. Two were killed and 10 injured. According to a statement released by the security forces, the blast took place at 0630 hours [0530 GMT] this morning and also damaged the town hall and the fire brigade headquarters.

Egypt

Egypt: Israel Urged Not To Let Bombings Impede Peace Process

NC0603160496 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 6 Mar 96

[Commentary by Ahmad Sha'ban: "Terrorists' Bombings Must Not Impede the Peace Process"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Egypt's stance on the events in the Palestinian and Israeli arenas is based on firm principles for which Egypt exerts every possible effort. Proceeding from these principles, Egypt believes that transitory incidents must not be allowed to disrupt the peace process. All parties are urged to exercise self-restraint and abstain from taking extraordinary measures that may place obstacles before the peace process. This is particularly true at a time when the entire region needs to see this process completed. In the meantime, Egypt reiterates its rejection of all types of violence and terrorism by all parties.

From the start of these bombings, which cause human casualties and property damage, Egypt has called,for self restraint, and held contacts with all parties. President Mubarak contacted Palestinian President 'Arafat and Israeli President Weizman. Egypt declared its condemnation and rejection of all acts of violence and called for an urgent international conference to combat the phenomenon of terrorism.

The series of bombings in Jerusalem, Ashqelon, and Tel Aviv have aroused widespread indignation among all lovers of peace and generated condemnation in almost all the world, including most of the Arab states. In the meantime, all parties emphasize that the peace process must continue and that peace is the best way to stop these terrorist actions, which are carried out by groups whose only goal is to block or stop the peace process and keep the conflict unresolved. [passage omitted]

We call on the Israeli Government not to resort to measures that may help the opponents of the peace process to achieve their goals. Suspending contacts with the Palestinians or breaking the negotiations with Syria will not benefit the peace process and will not achieve Israel's aspirations. It is true that fanatic extremists in Israel are blaming the Peres Government for what has happened, but they have not asked themselves about similar events that took place prior to the peace process. Out of their excessive fanaticism, they try to accuse the Palestinian Authority [PA] of failing to confront terrorists — whereas all those incidents have taken place in areas under Israeli control and beyond the jurisdiction of the Palestinians. Thus, accusing the PA of failure to prevent these incidents does not correspond to reality. The PA is doing its utmost to stop such actions.

Although these events deserve to be condemned, stopped, and prevented from recurring, they must not be a reason for stopping or impeding the peace process. On the contrary, they must serve as a bigger motive for bringing this process safely back to shore, for peace is the protective shield and the impregnable barrier against such incidents. It is also the umbrella that protects all parties, so that they may devote greater attention to development and reconstruction to the benefit of all peoples in the region under a just and comprehensive peace that provides safety and security to all.

Egypt: Mubarak Receives Message From 'Arafat

NC0603174596 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1630 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 6 Mar (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak received a message from Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat. Hani al-Hasan, adviser to the Palestinian president, delivered the message during a meeting with Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa today.

Musa said that he will convey the message to President Mubarak today. He noted that he and the Palestinian official discussed the current situation of the peace process and the circumstances it is facing. He said that they examined the various possibilities and the measures that the Palestinian Authority is taking to deal with the outcome of the latest operations to preserve and continue the peace process. He said that the noblest goal is to establish peace and attain the Palestinian people's rights and achieve security for all parties.

Foreign Minister Musa stressed that Egypt is in constant touch with the Palestinian and Israeli sides to bolster peace. He said that the important thing at this time is to assert that all parties are standing together and to save and continue the peace process. He added that he will meet tomorrow with Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat in Gaza for consultations on all aspects of the situation.

He noted that the meeting will be held on the sidelines of the opening session of Palestinian Legislative Council.

Regarding Israeli measures against the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, Musa said: The important thing is that the situation in the Palestinian territories should be aiming for progress in the peace process in order to pull the rug from under the feet of the extremist circles that are negatively influencing this process. He added that the intent of the peace process is to obtain the Palestinian people's rights. Anything that conflicts with this will be regarded as being counter to the Palestinian people's interests and also against the interests of peace and stability in the region.

On whether he has sensed from his contacts with the Israeli and Palestinian sides that Israel is willing to back down from the stringent stands it declared in the wake of recent incidents, Musa said: The statements we have heard from Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres have an element of hope that they will be able to continue with the peace process. He added that there are many other moves in reaction to the recent incidents and all this is being followed up. He stressed that now is not the time for escalation.

The foreign minister said: What is happening in the Palestinian territories and in south Lebanon and the suspension of the Syrian-Israeli talks is the result of the sudden conditions that have taken place. We should not be the prisoners of these conditions and peace should not be its victim. He added: We hope that what has happened, though regrettable, will not negatively affect the overall peace process because the peace objective is more important that any incident.

Egypt: 'Arafat Adviser Meets With Musa, Thanks Egypt for Supplies

NC0603163596 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Hani al-Hasan, political adviser to Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, thanked President Husni Mubarak on behalf of the Palestinian people for all the initiatives that he made to provide and secure the arrival of basic food supplies to the Palestinian people via the Rafah crossing point. After his meeting with Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa today, al-Hasan said this noble stand is expected of President Mubarak and the Egyptian people.

Asked about his meeting with Minister Musa today, al-Hasan said when things get complicated it is natural for us to approach sisterly Egypt to consult with it, exchange views, and chart future policies. He said that the situation in the occupied territories has become complicated and that there is an attempt to make the peace process fail. He added: I briefed Minister Musa on the latest developments in this regard.

Al-Hasan criticized Israel's measures and moves within the West Bank, which only served to reverse the process. He stressed that progress on the peace process, and not abandonment of this process, is what provides security. The Palestinian official added that he had discussed with Minister Musa preparations for the latter's visit to Gaza tomorrow to attend the opening session of the Palestinian Legislative Council and meet with President 'Arafat to discuss developments in the peace process.

[Cairo MENA in Arabic at 1515 GMT on 6 March in a Cairo-datelined item adds: "Hani al-Hasan, adviser to Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, has called on the Arab League to take swift and decisive measures to confront the dangers facing the Middle East peace process following the recent bombings in Jerusalem, which had a negative impact on the peace process.

["Speaking after his meeting today with Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, al-Hasan stressed the need for a unified Arab movement to let the world feel that the Arabs are united.

["Al-Hasan noted that Palestine will submit a paper to the Arab foreign ministers' meeting, to be held on 13 March in Cairo, on the peace process and the need for Arab coordination to confront the dangers threatening the peace process."]

Egypt: Musa Leaves for Gaza To Attend Palestinian Council Session

NC0703111196 Cairo MENA in English 1034 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, March 7 (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa left for Gaza today to attend the opening session of the Palestinian Legislative Council. He will also hold talks with Palestinian Leader Yasir 'Arafat to consult on the various issues related to the current status of the Middle East peace process in light of the latest developments in Israel, Musa said before leaving.

Musa added that he will deliver a message from President Husni Mubarak to 'Arafat on the latest developments in the region.

Musa is accompanied by a parliamentary delegation led by Dr. Tulbah 'Uwaydah, chairman of the People's Assembly Arab Affairs Committee and a large press delegation to cover this important historic event.

Egypt: Mubarak Addresses Students on Various Issues

NC0603201496 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1700 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Al-Zaqaziq, 6 Mar (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak has stressed Egypt's primary and pivotal role in the region and in the peace process. He noted that the gate to peace in the region was opened as a result of the October [1973] victory and the historic initiative launched by the late President Anwar al-Sadat, who was ahead of his time when he made the initiative.

At a meeting with Egyptian university youths in the city of al-Zaqaziq in al-Sharqiyah Governorate, President Mubarak said that had it not been for the victory Egypt achieved in October and the peace initiative, any progress in the region's peace process would not have been possible.

He added that the peace with Egypt began from a position of strength and that it was not begged. It was a peace based on terms in line with Egypt's standing and pride, he continued, noting that there are forces who want to strike at peace to achieve personal interests.

During his meeting with the Egyptian university youths, President Mubarak discussed the peace process, the role Egypt has been playing since the Camp David accords and the Egyptian peace treaty.

He noted that had Camp David's second paper devoted to the Palestinians been implemented, the peace process would have progressed and established a Palestinian state for the Palestinians.

He explained the complex problems that resulted from expanding the Israeli settlements and emphasized that the Palestinian question has now become more complex in terms of internal problems and issues and the foreign forces that will benefit from the no-war-no-peace status.

President Mubarak reiterated Egypt's support for the Palestinian cause and its stand alongside the Palestinians until they attain their legitimate rights and sovereignty over their land. He noted that there are several forces that stand to gain from the continuation of the state of no war and no peace and who do not want the peace to reach its ultimate end.

President Mubarak emphasized that the recent terrorist incidents have halted the peace process on the Palestinian track, that they had an impact on the Syrian track, and that they placed both the Palestinian Authority and the Israeli Government in difficult positions.

Mubarak urged the use of reason and logic for the Palestinians' sake and to maintain the peace process, stressing that these incidents oppose peace and the Palestinian cause.

He clarified that despite the negative effects on the peace process, peace remains the sound and right way to achieve stability.

President Mubarak told all parties that they should have the determination and resolve to realize a just and comprehensive peace. He emphasized that the future is for peace and dialogue and that the communications revolution has altered numerous concepts. Therefore, he noted, everyone must deal with each other through a new way of thinking and a method commensurate with the requirements of the age.

President Mubarak commented on Sudan's refusal to hand over suspects involved in the attempt to attack his motorcade in Addis Ababa last June and Sudan's announcement that it will set up electoral committees in Hala'ib. He emphasized that Sudan is a fraternal state, referring to his long-standing ties with the Sudanese people and their leadership and his continuous role since he was vice president in resolving Sudan's problems and pursuing its issues.

Mubarak said: We do not interfere in the internal affairs of Sudan or any other country. Therefore, the rumor that Egypt had a role in al-Bashir's coup is not true.

The president referred to the assistance extended by Egypt in light of the difficult economic situation in Sudan and to what Egypt offered al-Bashir's government when it came to power. He denied any interference in Sudan's decisionmaking.

He explained that Egypt never imposed a decision on Sudan and said that the report that Egypt intervened in choosing officials for public posts in Sudan was untrue.

He added that the Sudanese regime invents crises and that despite all these negative things, Egypt believes in the strategic ties linking the two countries and that it is enthusiastic about these ties.

President Mubarak discussed the role of the Sudanese Islamic Front in creating crises, controlling the Sudanese regime, and pushing it to adopt anti-Egyptian stances, thus damaging ties with Egypt. He stressed that all Egyptian laws conform with the Islamic shari'ah and that none of these laws violates the shari'ah.

President Mubarak referred to the practices of the Sudanese regime and those who claim to be religious, practices that do not conform with the Islamic shari'ah. He added that if a person or a faction wishes to become a leader, this will not be at Egypt's expense. Mubarak added: The picture is clear to us, and we know that there are terrorist camps in Sudan, we know their locations, who finances them, who provides the training, and who goes in and out.

President Mubarak described the Ethiopian investigations into the attack against him in Addis Ababa as completely neutral. He noted that the investigations had proved that all the individuals who took part in this incident had come from Sudan along with their weapons.

President Mubarak added: Had I not cared about the Sudanese people, I would have taken the harshest measures, but I never want to make an emotional decision or a decision that could leave a dark spot on the eternal and historic relations between the two peoples. President Mubarak stressed that Hala'ib is an Egyptian territory and those residing there are Egyptian. He added that we cannot accept any tampering with sovereignty over our territories and we will never strike at a Sudanese citizen or attack Sudanese territory. He added that Egypt's sovereignty over Hala'ib cannot be compromised, but it was possible to establish joint projects between the two sides, noting that cooperation exists between the Egyptian force and Sudanese individuals in the region.

President Mubarak referred to the Security Council resolution that called for handing over the defendants and noted the Sudanese regime's maneuvers and prevarication in this regard. He added: We have the capability to know the defendants' whereabouts. We say that the leaders of terrorism are there. We are doing our utmost so that no measures are adopted that may affect the Sudanese people, although the Sudanese regime commits follies and places itself at the service of terrorism and its goals.

Noting the special relations with the Sudanese people, President Mubarak added: We care about the Sudanese people the same way we care about our own people, but we will not cooperate or agree with a terrorist and bloody regime that is controlled by a handful of so-called leaders who are tightening the noose around the Sudanese president to seize power.

Regarding Egyptian-Saudi ties, President Mubarak stressed that they are strong, solid, and eternal. He noted that there are no differences in views between the two countries and that individual incidents must not affect the warm relations between the two countries. He noted that some external forces are trying to spoil this relationship, but we have to confront this by reporting the facts accurately. He referred to some attempts to spread rumors, which are baseless, with a view to undermining Egypt's ties with its Arab sisters. The purpose of these rumors, he added, is to harm the Egyptian expatriates and spoil bilateral relations. President Mubarak noted the good ties between Egypt and all the Arab states, including Saudi Arabia, all the Gulf states, Syria, Jordan, Kuwait, and all the Arab Maghreb countries. President Mubarak noted that of the Arab countries, Saudi Arabia has been the biggest supporter of Egypt economically, followed by the United Arab Emirates and Oman.

Concerning the situation in Qatar, President Mubarak said that our principle is always not to interfere in any domestic action in any country and we must not listen to any rumors in this regard.

Discussing the economic reforms in Egypt, President Mubarak stressed that the policy of economic reform spared Egypt from the being on the verge of danger. He maintained that without economic reform anarchy might have spread through the country as a result of the economic collapse. He noted that despite all the difficulties besetting world and regional economies, Egypt managed with its limited budget to achieve a balance. He said that the budget cannot tolerate more losses in 260 public sector companies, the value of which totals 88 billion Egyptian pounds with debts totaling 71 billion pounds. He pointed out that what is taking place under the so-called privatization program proceeds according to precise calculations to ensure overall economic reform and better performance so that Egypt may be able to confront population growth. He said that the government has been entrusted with taking bigger steps and addressing problems faster and overcoming all obstacles in the way of the reform process and facilitating investment. He said that the government is concerned to create job opportunities and facilitate measures for citizens and investors.

Discussing the phenomenon of terrorism and the recent incidents in Asyut, Upper Egypt, President Mubarak said: We will continue to confront terrorism forcefully, decisively, and relentlessly until we destroy and end every trace of terrorism in Egypt. We are continuing our efforts to confront terrorism and are lying in wait for terrorists. We are eager to establish stability. He noted the Egyptian people's position in confronting terrorism and the role played by the people of Asyut Governorate to confront the criminals. He said: It pains us to see the blood of citizens shed in the name of religion, adding that religion is innocent and has absolutely nothing to do with these crimes. He stressed that Islam is a religion of love and cooperation.

President Mubarak said that terrorism in Egypt is now limited to isolated and small places and is in its death throes. He noted that terrorism is an international phenomenon and that the international community is required to take a stand now that terrorism is threatening the people. He said that an international conference should be held to confront terrorism now that all big countries and others have been subjected to terrorist plots. He expressed his surprise at those who carry out acts of terror against innocent citizens in return for a handful of money.

Discussing the current regional and international arrangements and U.S. partnership, President Mubarak pointed out that Egypt's interests and future are taken into consideration in any decision without harming sovereignty. He said that international cooperation is aimed at benefiting from all resources to serve the national economy and Egypt. He said that partnership does not mean domination but joint cooperation. Mubarak added that the partnership provides Egypt with opportunities to export Egyptian products and to secure cooperation in the use of technology in all spheres and to promote performance. He said that if we fail to take advantage of the favorable opportunities, we will miss the train of progress.

Regarding the plans and programs worked out by the government to encourage and develop tourism, President Mubarak noted that the efforts of all state establishments and the private business sector focus on encouraging tourism and attracting capital to establish tourist projects in Egypt. He stressed the importance of tourism to Egypt, noting the facilities and exemptions given to tourist projects. He said that some people are demanding that exemptions be canceled, but this would lead to reduced investment in tourist projects and, consequently, would adversely affect job opportunities.

Commenting on Egyptian-Libyan relations and a recent report on mistreatment of Egyptian citizens, the president said the relationship between Egypt and the Libyan Jamahiriyah is extremely good and that some people are trying to make unfounded claims.

He added that the reported mistreatment of an Egyptian citizen could be an isolated incident and that the Libyan Jamahiriyah itself has denied the report. He said the Libyan information minister also confirmed that denial and we have nothing to indicate that an Egyptian national was mistreated on the Egyptian border.

Commenting on the recent explosions in Jerusalem, Ashqelon, and Tel Aviv, President Mubarak said that Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat was in a state of mourning. He added that 'Arafat is a courageous man who is working to regain the land despite hardships. What is taking place, Mubarak said, hampers the efforts to regain the land and that there will be no stability if the land is not retrieved and the peace process continues. He added that there are forces, rather states, that would be pleased if the peace process ended and they even support such efforts. If there are Palestinians among them, I do not believe [as received] they are prompted from abroad. He remarked that these explosions caused Israel to halt its withdrawal from Hebron.

Turning to the new draft bill on the press, President Mubarak said: The journalists are Egyptian citizens. We support press freedom, a responsible freedom. The suggested amendment was initiated and proposed by me through the formation of the committee that devised the new draft law. I have seen what was published. As long as it achieves parity between rights and duties and protects the journalists and the people, I welcome it. He added: Also I am not concerned about the issue of preventive detention as long as it does not violate the Constitution. If more rights are to be given, this must be reciprocated by a commitment to duties.

President Mubarak arrived at al-Zaqaziq University before noon today and met with Egyptian university presidents and then met with Egyptian university youths for an open dialogue.

The meeting was attended by Prime Minister Dr. Kamal al-Janzuri, ministers of agriculture, information, interior, administrative development, public business sector, health, housing, and local administration, and the governor of al-Sharqiyah, in addition to the minister of education and university presidents.

Egypt: Muslim Brotherhood Leader Mashhur Interviewed

MM0703123396 London FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH in Arabic Mar 96 pp 29-30

[Interview with Mustafa Mashhur, general guide of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, by an unidentified correspondent; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH] Will the death of Muhammad Hamid Abu-al-Nasr, the Muslim Brotherhood's former general guide, lead to a turning point that will influence the Muslim Brotherhood's actions and approach?

[Mashhur] Our lives are in the hands of God Almighty. We believe that the eminent Professor Hamid Abu-al-Nasr performed his duties in the best way. Rewards are in the hands of God only, and we pray to the Almighty to let him dwell in His heaven, to direct us toward what is good, and to allow us to continue on the same path and toward the same objective without hesitation or change.

[FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH] The peaceful general guide changeover has given a clear example of the Muslim Brotherhood's style of action and provided a response to some people's allegations that there are conflicts within the Muslim Brotherhood leadership over leadership positions. Do you believe that the Muslim Brotherhood's behavior will always provide the response to such allegations, or is it your intention not to ignore them and to issue statements to refute them?

[Mashhur] We are neither worried by allegations nor concerned by accusations or false claims. Some people have made allegations and many have made false claims, but the Muslim Brotherhood has adhered to its line, performing its role by spreading the call and working to that effect, with the help of God Almighty. What is done for God will endure, and what is not for God will be cut off and will be divided. Accusations, allegations, and false claims have never deterred the preachers from accomplishing their task, neither have they hampered their achievements and contribution, which they do in the name of God alone.

[FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH] What are the Muslim Brotherhood's priorities for action under your leadership in the next phase?

[Mashhur] We are people of the message. We remind people of matters related to their religion and unite them on the correct Islamic interpretations and behavior. We seek neither power nor spoils, and we try to please God alone and gain his reward. Priorities in any era revolve around what is good for the call.

[FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH] What will the Muslim Brotherhood's approach be with regard to dealing with the security situation intended for it? Could there be some reconciliation or truce with regard to relations between the Muslim Brotherhood and the political authorities?

[Mashhur] We extend our hands to all patriotic forces in this country with the aim of working loyally and earnestly toward its progress and renaissance. Constructive dialogue is our way to achieve a consensus with everyone on what is good for Egypt. The Muslim Brotherhood's approach for action and achievement draws on the way of the Prophet, peace be upon him, and as ordained by the Holy Koran (Invite (all) to the Way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching) [Koranic verse].

[FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH] In your view, what has caused the regime's sudden change toward the Muslim Brotherhood, reflected in the contradiction between statements made by the political leadership some years ago and their statements now?

[Mashhur] First, we care about relations with Almighty God and honest intentions. Second, we believe that as far as the people, parties, and noble patriotic forces are concerned, the Muslim Brotherhood enjoys support and affection and is held above suspicion. Our history provides enough proof of that, with its pages free of blemishes and our march above accusations.

[FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH] Is dialogue with the government part of the Muslim Brotherhood's priorities and plan for action, or is it a matter that has been postponed and deferred?

[Mashhur] We have said before that we do not close our doors to any forces or quarters which adopt dialogue. We tried to knock on the government's door with a view to holding a dialogue whose sole objective is the good of the country and the people, but the doors remained locked.

[FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH] The government is waging a media campaign against the Muslim Brotherhood. Is responding to it among the primary concerns of the Muslim Brotherhood's political action, or do you view this campaign as a ploy to force the Muslim Brotherhood into the cycle of action and reaction and prevent it from achieving its objectives?

[Mashhur] The Muslim Brotherhood is deprived of the right to publish newspapers, a right guaranteed by the Constitution, and of the right to work in the political, social, and economic arena without hindrance or restraint, another right guaranteed by the Constitution, which was taken away along with its right to publish newspapers by virtue of exceptional laws, which we consider harsh and unjust. Hence we do not have the media means and resources that the government has, and through which it directs its media campaigns against us. We do not really attach a great deal of importance to the campaigns and accusations. As we stressed before, they will neither stop a march nor prevent the preachers from performing their duties to their best ability.

[FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH] The Jerusalem issue has been a major concern to the Muslim Brotherhood since its inception. Would you care to reiterate your basic position on this issue, especially in the light of the recent developments in the peace process and the Palestinian elections?

[Mashhur] We have never refrained from making our fundamental position known on the Jerusalem issue. All our literature reflects this position, inspired by true Islam, which orders Muslims not to relinquish an inch of their land and rejects surrendering to the evil aggressors.

[FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH] As the fifth person to assume the mantle of the Muslim Brotherhood's general guide, do you intend to bring in some changes to the responsibilities of this post that would be in line with the challenges currently facing the Muslim Brotherhood?

[Mashhur] The path of the call is full of hardship and adversity. Preachers, wherever they are, are required to work, make sacrifices, mobilize all resources, use all legal modern methods to perform their task, and rise to the challenges facing their call.

[FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH] What are your views on limiting the guide's tenure to six years?

[Mashhur] Previously, the general guide's post was for life. However, after the late Hamid Abu-al-Nasr's death, the Muslim Brotherhood proposed to limit the guide's tenure to six years, subject to renewal, in keeping with the ideas and requirements of the era, and also to nominate the best and most suitable elements for the post of guide.... I believe that this would bring new blood into the Muslim Brotherhood and promote individuals with new ideas.... We did not think of this in the past because there was no need for it and because the guide is a symbol on whom all the Muslim Brotherhood members are supposed to agree.

[FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH] Some people have said that the setting up of the al-Wasat Party away from the Muslim Brotherhood's structures indicates a conflict between the two generations, the young people and the shaykhs. Would you care to comment?

[Mashhur] There is no conflict but there is some form of interaction between the two generations. The young people benefit from the elders' worldly experience, and the elders benefit from the young people's enthusiasm.... We thank God that we are not people in conflict, and we adhere to the precepts of our religion which urges us to avoid rifts.

Libya

Libya: Iraq's Ramadan Concludes Visit, Departs

LD0603213096 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Brother Taha Yasin Ramadan, member of the Revolution Command Council and vice president in the Republic of Iraq and personal envoy of Iraqi President Saddam Husayn, and the delegation accompanying him, left the Great Jamahiriyah this afternoon. Brother Taha Yasin Ramadan and the delegation accompanying him were seen off by the brother secretary of the General People's Committee for Unity and the Iraqi ambassador to the Great Jamahiriyah.

In a statement to the Libyan news agency JANA, brother Taha Yasin Ramadan expressed his happiness about this visit and said that it came within the framework of the consolidation of fraternal relations between the two sisterly countries.

Libya: GPC Law Reorganizes People's Control

LD0103183596 Tripoli Great Jamahiriyah Radio Network in Arabic 1358 GMT 29 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Secretariat of the General People's Congress has issued Law No. 11 for the year of 1425 [after the birth of the Prophet] regarding the reorganizing of the people's control. Here is the text:

The General People's Congress [GPC];

In implementation of the resolutions of the basic people's congresses at their second ordinary session for the year of 1424 [after the birth of the Prophet] and which were drafted by the general meeting of the basic people's congresses, the people's committees, trade unions, associations, and vocational unions — the General People's Congress — at its ordinary session during the period 18-24 of the month of Ramadan, corresponding to 7-13 of February, 1425 [after the birth of the Prophet];

And after taking cognizance of the Declaration of the Establishment of the People's Authority, and the Great Green Document on Human Rights in the era of the masses, and Law No. 20 for 1991 regarding the bolstering of freedom, and after taking cognizance of Law No. 88 for 1974 regarding the reorganization of the central body of the general administrative control, and Law No. 79 for 1975 regarding the audit office, and Law No. 16 for 1986 regarding the people's follow-up body, and the law on criminal proceedings and the law concerning the State's financial system and the laws amending the aforesaid law, and the law relating to the judiciary system issued by Law No. 51 for 1976, and the Civil Service Law which was issued by Law No. 55 for 1976 and its amendments, and Law No. 15 for 1981 regarding the statute on the salaries of the Libyan nationals working in the Socialist People Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah [words indistinct] and its amendments, and Law No. 15 for 1923 [as heard] regarding the provisions relating to the joint stock companies which are wholly or partially owned by the State, and Law No. 1 for 1425 [after the birth of the Prophet] regarding the system of function of the people's congresses and committees,

The following Law has been drafted:

Article One: In applying the provisions of this law, the phrases mentioned hereinafter are interpreted by the meanings written against each of them unless such a meaning indicates the contrary [as heard].

The Body: The People's Control Body [jihaz al-raqabah al-sha'biyah]

The Body's People's Committee: The General People's Committee of the Body of People's Control

The Secretary of the People's Committee of the Body: The Secretary of the General People's Committee of the Body of the People's Control.

The Member of the Committee: The Member of the General People's Committee of the Body of the People's Control who is elected by the basic people's congress.

Member of the [people's control] body: The technical employee [as heard] who is granted the membership by a decision of the secretary of the General People's Committee of the People's Control Body

Sectors subjected to the control: All the public sectors, the public companies, the public bodies and institutions, the autonomous bodies, the public services and administrations, the public projects, and all other sectors subjected to the control of the People's Control Body by virtue of the provisions of this law.

Disciplinary Council: a disciplinary council for financial offenses.

Chapter One: on the formation of the People's Control Body and the definition of its prerogatives.

Article Two: The People's Control Body is an independent body attached to the General People's Congress.

Article Three: The body is run by a general people's committee made up of a secretary chosen by the General People's Congress and the members of the people's control elected by the Basic People's Congresses. A sufficient number of members and technical and administrative employees are attached to this body.

Article Four: The body aims at achieving an effective financial, administrative and technical control over all the sectors subjected to its control in order to find out to what extent these sectors are meeting their objectives, fulfilling the duties assigned to them, and implementing the laws. It also seeks to ensure that those working in these sectors aim, by carrying out their duties, to serve the people and operate the public amenities with discipline and continuity. The body will also endeavor to uncover financial and administrative crimes and offenses committed by those working in these sectors or any others if these offenses are aimed at undermining the carrying out of the duties of the function or the public service or are aimed at harming the public administration or the public funds. The body will then investigate these offenses and take the necessary measures to interrogate their perpetrators.

Article Five: Without violating the provisions of the Law relating to the judicial system, issued by Law No. 51 for 1976, under the Body's control will be all the sectors which are financed from the State's general budget or which are totally or partially owned by the State, and especially the following:

First: the sectors that are administered by people's committees and units belonging to them.

Second: the self-supporting administrative units, the bodies, and public establishments, and those under their jurisdictions.

Third: the public authorities and establishments.

Fourth: the public companies.

Fifth: the companies in which any of the sectors mentioned in the above clauses participate by not less than 25 percent of their capitals, or which guarantee for them a minimum amount of profits inside or outside [Libya] whether their laws stipulate or otherwise special provisions for financial auditing or technical revision.

Sixth: the projects whose owners obtain exemptions or direct support from the State, or loans from the said if the loan contract stipulates that these projects should be subjected to the Body's control.

Seventh: the trade unions, associations, vocational union, establishments and sporting, cultural and social clubs, etc.

Eighth: the institutions, establishments and societies of public benefit whose activities are supervised by the State or which the State participates in them directly or indirectly.

Ninth: the people's bureaux and the fraternal bureaux [Libyan embassies] abroad, and the departments belonging to them.

Tenth: the foreign companies which operate inside the Jamahiriyah, or which carry out contracts for the order to sectors subject to the Body's control within the limits of the works which they carry out inside the Jamahiriyah or in favor of the sectors subject to this law.

Eleventh: Any other side which the General People's Congress issues a decision to bring it under the control of the Body.

Article Six: The People's Committee of the Body will have the task of monitoring the general policy organizing the people's control, laying down plans and programs relating to the implementation of this control, and undertaking to arrange the annual budget and the final accounts of the Body, and issuing the statutes organizing its function.

Article Seven: The secretary of the People's Committee of the Body will administer the affairs of the Body, and administratively and technically supervise the work within the Body, and will particularly carry out the following:

Invite the Body's People's Committee to meet, and administer its meeting and implement its decisions.

Represent the Body in its links with others and before the law; it can appoint someone to deputize for him in this regard.

Propose the draft of the statutes organizing the work of the Body and the affairs of its members and officials, and the financial and administrative affairs, and the purchasing and contracting.

Issue decisions relating to the affairs of employment of the official of the Body, and all the decisions relating to the organizing of the affairs of the control including the laying down of the necessary plans, programs and methods for exercising this control.

Designate a person to replace him during his absence or if there is something preventing him from carrying out his duties.

Prepare the annual report of the Body and submit it to the basic people's congresses.

Article Eight: A member of the People's Committee of the Body, and within the limit of the basic people's congress which elected him, will gather information and data relating to the extent of the implementation of the resolutions of the basic people's congress which it may take vis-a-vis local issues, and follow up the progress of the action of the quarter's people's committee. To this end he will do the following:

1: Prepare the periodical reports regarding the various activities and submit them to the basic people's congress which elected him, during its local sessions.

2: To disclose financial and administrative crimes and offenses committed by members of the commune's people's committee and its affiliated organs.

3: To combat administrative negligence in the commune's people's committee, the administrative units and in other affiliated bodies.

4: To monitor the work of the sectorial and private cooperatives, the distribution of goods and the market's activities.

5: To attend the meetings which are held between the secretariat of the basic people's congress and the commune's people's committee

6: To obtain copies of the meetings' minutes of the people's committee of the commune, the resolutions issued by it and ascertain to what extent they correspond to the enforced legislations.

7: To follow up the work of the real estate allocation committee to ascertain to what extent it corresponds to the enforced legislations.

8: To receive and follow up complaints and statements. To carry out these duties, member of the Body's People's Committee has the mandate of the judicial control officer. In all the cases stipulated in the abovementioned articles, member of the Body's People's Committee carries out the classification and categorization of the data and statements gathered within the framework of the people's monitoring work and the disclosed financial and administrative crimes and offenses, and prepare the necessary reports on them to be referred later to the secretary of the Body's People's Committee in order to take the necessary legal measures.

Article Nine: The organizational structure of the organ consists of the following divisions:

1. Financial Monitoring Division
2. Technical Auditing Division
3. Administrative Auditing Division
4. Investigation Division

Each section has a chairman with the rank of [word indistinct] secretary. Some sections will be allowed to merge or new ones created, as needed, in accordance with a resolution issued by the organ's people's committee. In the Organ's statute [word indistinct] a resolution by the secretary of the Organ's People's Committee.

Chapter Two: Section One: The jurisdictions of the Financial Audit Division:

Article Ten: The Financial Audit Division shall have the task of auditing the final accounts of the State for the financial year just ended, and preparing an annual report on that detailing the remarks and recommendations which the Body wants to make and the differences between it and the various sectors. The secretary of the People's Committee shall assume the task of presenting this report to the basic people's congresses through the Secretariat of the General People's Congress, with a copy of the report being presented to the General People's Committee and the General Peoples Committee for Finance within a date not exceeding four months after the Body has received the final accounts from the General People's Committee for Finance. Similar reports can be presented whenever necessary on issues which the Body may deem important or serious enough to require urgent discussion. The General People's Committee for Finance should present the final accounts of the State to the Body within a period not exceeding six months after the end of the financial year.

Article Eleven: [A] The Financial Audit Division should, when auditing the State's revenues, pay attention to the following:

1: make sure of the soundness of the internal control system over the revenues.

2: monitor the collection of revenues and make sure that all amounts which have been collected have been recorded as revenues for the Public Treasury and that they have been listed into the appropriate accounts.

3: make sure that all provisions of the financial laws and their statutes have been soundly applied and to draw attention to any infringement in this regard.

4: study the effective financial statutes and provisions in order to make sure that they are being applied and that they are sufficient and applicable in order to guarantee tax and dues collection and all other public revenues in a manner appropriate to the laws which are in force.

B: [as received] The Financial Auditing Division should particularly ensure the following:

1: that the dossiers on the collection of revenues, the documents which are substitute for these dossiers, and the records have been audited by the competent officials, and that the amounts shown in the aforesaid have been added correctly to the public revenues.

2: that the detailed revenues and the outstanding revenues which have been presented by the public departments clearly show that the revenues which have been collected plus the outstanding amounts which have not been collected total the revenues which the State expects to collect in accordance with the laws and statutes which are in force, and that the receiving departments shall not ignore or neglect the collection of these outstanding amounts.

3: that no exemption from tax, or duty, or from the payment of any other funds which are due except in the events stipulated by laws, and with the approval of the legally competent authorities.

4: that the collection of taxes and dues and all other public revenues has been carried out according to the laws.

Article Twelve: A: With regard to expenditure, the Financial Audit Division shall carry out the following:

1: to make sure of the soundness of the internal control over expenditure.

2: to ascertain that all allocations have been spent on the purposes for which they were earmarked, and that the spending has been made in accordance with the laws and statutes that are in force.

3: to make sure that all payments are backed and approved by correct documents, and to make sure that the figures on such documents tally with the figures shown in the accounts.

4: to make sure of adhering to all statutes and procedures by the public shops and their branches, and to make sure that they have correctly been applied, and to draw attention to shortcomings, if any.

B: The Financial Audit Division should make sure of the following:

1: that the amounts which have been spent on each clause of the budget totally tally with the figures shown in the relevant documents.

2: that all expenditure documents have correctly been issued and within the limits of their authorizations and that they have been issued by the competent authorities and in accordance with the laws and statutes and that they are coupled with all other necessary documents.

3: that all expenditures have been deducted from the appropriate clauses specified in the budget, and that the amounts have actually been allocated for the specified purpose.

4: that the approved figures for any clause of the budget have not been exceeded, except after obtaining approval for that from the competent authorities.

5: that all the amounts which have been spent on new works or on development plan have been spent for the purposes which they have been earmarked for and that no spending has been made on work not mentioned in the budget without the approval of the competent authorities.

6: the correctness of the reasons which led to the non-expenditure of all or part of some of the allocations earmarked for new works or for development and that saving in a specific allocation has not been made for the purpose of adjusting an overspending in an another allocation specified for another work unless permission for that is obtained from a competent authority in order to meet excesses in the final costs of that work.

7: to ensure that no public department or authority is bound by any undertakings which may lead to exceeding amounts which have been allocated for any clause of the budget, even if the latter have not actually been spent.

8: to ensure that the decisions relevant to appointment, promotion and granting of all types of allowances, have been issued in accordance with the appropriate laws and statutes within the limits of the budget and financial regulations and to observe the regulations relevant to the classes of the jobs which haven granted on personal basis or which have been decided to abolish or adjusting when the first opportunity of vacancy becomes available.

9: to make sure that the salaries and the awards have been approved or adjusted in accordance with the provisions of the laws and statutes which are in force.

Article Thirteen: When auditing the revenues and expenditures, the Financial Audit Division should ensure the following:

1: to separate between the accounts of the revenues and the accounts of the expenditures at the banks, and that the spending is done according to checks, except in certain necessary cases, when spending is done by way of the funds available for petty expenses.

2: to make sure of the monthly settlements of the accounts of the banks and ensuring that they correspond with the ledgers.

3: to make sure of the settlement of undertakings and advances periodically and to make sure that the settlement of all undertakings and advances is done by the end of the financial year.

4: to periodically carry out stock-taking of all accounts of the Treasury and the banks.

5: to make sure of the soundness and efficiency of the financial systems and documentation and of the completion of the records.

6: to make sure of the necessary evidence of proof.

Article Fourteen: In order to carry out its tasks outlined in this Law, the Financial Audit Division shall inspect and audit the accounts and the relevant documents and evaluate the efficiency of the performance of the sectors which are subject to the control of the Body in accordance with the technical and accounting usage and within the limits of the bases regulating the activities of the said and according to the provisions and regulations stipulated by the statute of this Law. The Division can practice this activity either at the premises of the Body or at its branches or at the premises of the sectors which have to present their accounts to it on demand; it also has the right to directly contact the directors of accounts, auditors, and other officials acting for them in the said sectors, and correspond with them and request them to furnish the statements which it deems necessary.

Article Fifteen:

1: The assigning of accounts auditors who are at the departments, establishments and public companies — which are totally or partially owned by the State, and whose laws stipulate a special system for auditing the accounts — shall be made as per a decision by the secretary of the people's committee of the Body. The secretary shall also assume the task of specifying the awards to be granted to those auditors for their work.

2: without infringing the responsibility of the auditors of accounts vis-a-vis the departments, establishments, and companies mentioned in the previous paragraph, the auditors shall be responsible before the Body for their inspection and auditing the accounts of the said departments, establishments, and companies, and shall be regarded as having been assigned to carry out a public service for the application of the provisions of Article Twenty of this Law.

3: the Body can contact the auditors of accounts at the departments, establishments, and companies mentioned in paragraph 1 above of this Article, and give them guidance regarding the method of inspection and auditing, and they have to furnish the Body with the reports they prepare regarding the tasks they have been assigned to do, and the Body can review these reports and obtain any necessary information to put right any inadequate or ambiguous parts in the said reports, or can entrust the said auditors to carry out this task. When auditing the accounts of these departments, establishments, and companies, the Body can regard the reports submitted to it by the said auditors as being sufficient after they have been completed, or to carry out special auditing which it may deem necessary. For this purpose it can obtain all the necessary clarifications and statements from the auditors or from the departments, establishments, and companies themselves, and can peruse the ledgers and documents and the like which is required by inspection and auditing.

4: the auditing of the accounts of the departments, establishments, and companies mentioned in paragraph 1 above of this Article shall be conducted according to accounting usage and within the provisions of the regulations pertaining to the works of these companies and projects.

5: the management committees and officials at the departments, establishments and companies mentioned in paragraph 1 of this Article should outline the explanation notes mentioned in the report they submit to the general assemblies or other authorities, councils or competent committees which are tasked with the approval of the budget and final accounts of these departments, establishments, and companies. The Body can attend the meetings which they hold to discuss and adopt the budget and the final accounts.

6: The departments, establishments, and companies mentioned in paragraph 1 of this Article are not permitted to enter into contracts regarding the preparation of financial and accounting systems and data systems or the amendment or development of the already existing systems unless after obtaining the approval of the Body.

Article Sixteen: The Financial Control Division should audit all accounts which are outside the budget and relating to deposits, securities, and current accounts, etc. in order to ascertain the correctness of the operations relating to them and that their figures which are recorded in the accounts are supported by correct and adequate documents.

The loans and credits given by the state, or institutions, or public bodies will have to reviewed.

Article Seventeen: The financial control division may carry out at any time a surprise study or search of the treasuries and accounts, it may also examine the documents stipulated in laws and statutes and any other documents and files which are deemed to be necessary for the review including the confidential ones among them. It may confiscate whatever it wants from these documents, files, papers, other documents and obtain copies of them. It may also require from the person in charge of these documents a certificate to authenticate them and it may also summon anyone who needs to be heard. The executory statute of this law determines the provisions and regulations to be followed in this respect.

Article Eighteen: It is the Body's responsibility to take any necessary measures to recover any sums of money owed to the state or to any department under the control of the Body which did not take the necessary measures to recover moneys which were squandered in a way contravening the law.

Article Nineteen: It is the secretary of the People's Committee for the Body's responsibility to warn the people in charge in the departments under the control of the Body of what he knows concerning any avoidable loss or any unnecessary burden on the state's financial resources, if that burden or loss may lead to pursuing a specific financial policy in that particular department.

He should also inform the secretary of the General People's Committee and the secretary of the General People's Committee for Finance of the cases in which he sees that the application of any law or statute relating to financial or accounting aspects may lead to harming public interest or that they are in need of amendment.

Article Twenty: The secretary of the people's committee of the Body can decide to make any official in the establishments which is subject to the Body's control or any person entrusted with a public service to pay back any amount which the secretary is of the view that the said official or person has spent, or has ordered to be spent, out of public monies without there being any justification or in violation of the approved regulations, or to pay compensation for the outcome of the squandering of the monies or loss or damage to stored material or properties or such other damages sustained by the State or by any party subject to the control of the Body, as a result of the said official or person's negligence or error; the decision shall determine the amount of compensation.

Any official or person against whom such a decision is taken can appeal to a committee which convenes under the chairmanship of a judge of the Supreme Court, nominated by the President of the Supreme Court, and with the membership of the Head of the Legal Department and the Secretary General of the Secretariat of the General People's Committee of Finance. This committee shall hear the person who has lodged the appeal or conduct the investigations it may deem necessary and order a stay of the decision which has been appealed against, unless it orders otherwise. The committee's decision shall be final and no appeal can be lodged against it except before the Supreme Court.

Article Twenty-One: If the Body becomes aware that there are actions that have inflicted damage on the public money, the secretary of the people's committee of the Body can order the suspension from work of the person who has caused the damage; in this case he can suspend also the administering of the accounts at the banks of the parties which have sustained the damage. The release of these accounts can only be done after making sure that the damage had been removed.

Section Two: The jurisdictions of the Technical Control Division:

Article Twenty-Two: The Technical Control Division shall have the tasks of inspecting and reviewing the draft development plan immediately after its completion. The secretary of the people's committee of the Body shall refer all remarks becoming apparent to the parties entrusted with the preparation of the plan not later than three months after receiving the draft plan.

Article Twenty-Three: Contracts of supply, enterprise and undertaking and other contracts which are submitted to control, and which are liable to yield financial rights or obligations with a contract value of more than 500,000 dinars each, are subject to the Body's control at the pre-contracting stage.

The guidance in fixing this value is based on the total value of the various components or transactions which are the subject of contracting and are calculated in the case of tender on the basis of the minimum price of the bids made which fulfill conditions.

In those cases, it is not allowed to divide the contract with the aim to reduce its value to below the threshold rate [500,000 dinars] which would enable one to avoid control. Evidence of this division can be seen when the party concerned submits other tenders and carries out other transactions of the same type within a period of less than three months as of the date of signing the contract.

The Body can halt all the procedures resulting from the contracts which are divided up and those who violate this law will be submitted to investigation in accordance with the measures stipulated in this law. No contract with a value of more than 500,000 dinars can be signed without prior review by the Body.

Article Twenty-Four: The technical control department carries out the review at the pre-contracting stage, stipulated in article 23, and carries out the following tasks in particular:

1. Making sure there is abidance at the time of contracting by the provisions of the legislations on contracting and systems in force.

2. Making sure that the products which are to be imported from abroad have no sufficient local equivalents and are in compliance with the accredited specifications.

3. Making sure of the suitability of the prices on the basis of which contracting takes place in the light of the studies carried out by the competent parties on the basis of the international average prices.

Article Twenty-Five: All parties whose contracts are subject to pre-review must send to the Body photocopies of the letters in which they apply for permission for submitting the project to contract. They must enclose a statement outlining the subject of the contract; technical, economic and legal studies; engineering drawings; specifications; general conditions; estimates; minutes and reports of committees in charge of biddings and commissions emanating from them. They must also enclose any other documents on the basis of which the operation is submitted and which the Body considers important to peruse. The Body reviews the documents of contracting and forwards its reports and observations on them to the party applying for contracting with a copy to the quarters in charge of approving the contracting.

Article Twenty-Six: The technical control department verifies before payment the authenticity of the documents concerning the payment of any sums resulting from any contract with a value of more than 500,000 dinars. It also verifies the above immediately after payment with regard to contracts with a value ranging between 100,000 and 500,000 dinars.

Article Twenty-Seven: The Technical Control Division shall follow up the stages of implementing the contracted projects in order to ascertain the soundness of the supplying procedures and making sure that they conform with the conditions, drawings, and technical specifications on which the contracts were signed. The Technical Control Division shall periodically follow up the projects which have been implemented and which have been delivered in order to make sure of the soundness of their functioning and maintenance and the fact that they realize the purposes for which they were carried out. It will also prepare reports to communicate its remarks to the competent parties in an effort to preserve the public funds.

Article Twenty-Eight: The contracts which are entered by the parties mentioned in paragraphs 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 of Article Five of this Law shall be exempted from the application of the provisions of articles 23, 24, 25, 26, and 27 of this Law.

Section Three: The jurisdictions of the Administrative Control Division

Article Twenty-Nine: The Administrative Control Sections shall carry out the necessary investigations to ascertain the reasons behind any shortcoming in the performance of duty in the fields of production, distribution, and services by the parties which are liable for control, reveal any blemishes in the operative administrative systems that may hinder good performance in work and the rendering of services, and suggest the means which are apt to avoid that and in a manner that may lead to the increasing of production and improving the performance, developing, and speeding up the delivery and lowering the cost of the services. To this end it can do any of the following:

1: to follow up the performance and to combat administrative laxity, and conduct the necessary investigations in order to expose any unjust administrative practices against any person [passage indistinct]

2: To expose the crimes and violations committed by those working in the establishments, which are liable for the control of the Division, during the performance of their duties or as a result of their duties, and take the necessary measures to combat such crimes and violations.

3: To expose the crimes and violations which are committed by others who are not mentioned in the previous paragraph of this article if such crimes and violations aim at harming the performance of a public service or position or at inflicting a damage on public interest, and to take the necessary measures to combat such crimes and violations.

4: To follow up, evaluate, and activate imports, exports, distribution, and marketing of the commodities, equipment, and various materials which are done by the parties liable for control.

5: To discuss, study any complaints received by the Division from individuals or any establishment in the State, deal with it and publish the results of such discussion and study.

6: To study and discuss any complaints and investigations published in the press and the other media outlets, and media enquiries, views, and proposals regarding the performance within the Control Division.

Article Thirty: The Administrative Control Division shall follow up, inspect, and study the laws, statutes, decisions, and regulations which are in force in order to ascertain that they are adequate for the purposes for which they were laid down and enacted, and propose the amendments which deal with the shortcomings, and to investigate the reasons behind shortcomings, laxity, or difficulties in implementing them, and propose the means which avoid all this.

Article Thirty-One: The Control Division can adopt the necessary means for investigating and exposing the crimes and aspects of shortcomings at work or in production; it can also apply individual scrutiny if there is any serious justification for that, on condition that this measure is carried out with written permission from the secretary of the People's Committee of the Control Body.

Article Thirty-Two: Without infringing the provisions of Article Twenty-One of this law, the Administrative Control Division can request the suspension of any official from duty if there are strong justifications which call for the adoption of such measure and for serious reasons relating to the requirements of public interest. The suspension decision shall be issued by the secretary of the People's Committee of the Body; the rest of the approved provisions shall be applied in respect of any suspension pending investigation.

Article Thirty-Three: All parties should inform the Body of any violations taking place after the latter have been discovered. They have to inform it of the results of investigation of those violations and the measures which have been taken in that connection. The Body can conduct another investigation with its knowledge and ask for the necessary measure to be taken in that regard. It can also refer the matter to the public prosecution or the people's prosecution bureau, or the disciplinary council according to the case.

Article Thirty-Four: If investigations or scrutiny reveal matters which require further investigations the secretary of the People's Committee of the Body shall refer the papers to the investigation section within the Body or to the public prosecution according to the case.

Section Four: The jurisdictions of the investigation division

Article Thirty-Five: The Investigation Division shall carry out an investigation into the following violations which the officials working at the establishments which are liable for the control of the Body, are accused of:

1: The violations and crimes referred by the control divisions of the Body.

2: The violations and crimes referred by the competent establishments. In all cases the secretary of the People's Committee of the Body or whom he authorizes shall refer such matters.

Article Thirty-Six: The investigation department notifies the competent secretary or whoever it empowers to carry out his duties about the establishments which are subject to control and to which the investigating member is assigned at the beginning of the investigation if the referral [of the case to him] is not carried out on the basis of a request from the competent secretary or whoever is acting for him.

Article Thirty-Seven: The investigating member must subpoena the defendant and the witnesses working in the establishments which are subject to control and other people concerned. He must listen to the statements of the witnesses after they take the oath and he will have to get the assistance of those who have experience.

The defendant and the witnesses are subject to the provisions of the law on penal proceedings and investigation with the knowledge of the public prosecutor's office of the very matter of the case and the hearing.

The adopted provisions concerning legal expertise are applicable to experts.

Article Thirty-Eight: The defendant is notified about investigation at least three days before the commencement of investigation and he is allowed to attend in person the stages of investigation unless the investigation services require that investigation is carried out in his absence.

Article Thirty-Nine: If the investigation department finds that the contravention which is the subject of investigation is financial it must refer the documents related to it to the financial control department for scrutiny and review and the financial control department must return the documents and enclose with them a memorandum containing its viewpoint.

Article Forty: Investigation in accusations made against civil servants concerning financial breaches should be brought to the knowledge of the members of the investigation division. Investigations in these breaches should be carried out in accordance with the rules and regulations stipulated in this law and the civil service code.

Article Forty-One: It is the prerogative of the secretary of the People's Committee for the Body, in case of an investigation, to allow the search of accused and their houses should there be strong justifications for this measure. In any case, the permit should be given in a written form, and the search should be carried out by one of the members of the investigation department in the Body. It is noteworthy that the investigator should carry out a search of the work place and others places used by the accused who are under investigation. Minutes of the investigation and its results, the presence or the absence of the accused when the investigation was carried out, must all be written down. Should the accused not belong to the services which come under the authority of the control division, a written authorization must be sought from the secretary of the People's Committee for the Body.

Article Forty-Two: The Body representative to the investigation department may temporarily dismiss from their work whoever has been accused among the employees of the services under the authority of the control division should this be required by the investigation process. The duration of this dismissal must not exceed three months unless the discipline council or the competent discipline authority decide otherwise.

Article Forty-Three: The investigator shall submit the investigation papers after the completion of the investigation to the official representing the Body at the investigation division or the official delegated by the secretary of the People's Committee of the Body, including a memorandum containing the outcome of the investigations, and his opinion of the latter.

Article Forty-Four: If the secretary of the People's Committee of the Body decides on keeping the investigation open or if the infringement [passage indistinct] The case before the competent court and to this end he shall have the jurisdictions approved for the member of the public prosecution, including appealing against the verdicts issued in that connection. But if the public prosecutor at the investigation division decides not to bring a criminal case then he will order the release of the accused unless the latter was detained for another reason. The secretary of the People's Committee of the Body can cancel the order... [pauses] In this, he will have all the jurisdictions approved for the public prosecutor and officials of the public prosecution departments with regard to the law of criminal procedures.

Article Forty-Six: [as received] Decisions issued by the competent disciplinary councils in accordance with the provisions of Article Forty-Four of this law are to be reported to the Body within fifteen days of their date of issuance. Secretary of the People's Committee for the Body may challenge the decisions referred to before the competent court on time and according to the decisions set for this.

Chapter Three: The Body's Members and Officials

Article Forty-Seven: The members and technical and administrative officials of the Body's must be Libyan nationals with higher education qualification or university degrees in law, accountancy, audit, economy, engineering, or any other higher education or university qualification which the nature of work at the Body would require.

Exemption from the abovementioned qualification condition for administrative, clerical, technical support, and professional staff may be made with a decision from the secretary of the People's Committee for the Body.

Article Forty-Eight: In addition to the stipulations made in the previous article, anyone nominated for a job at the Body must have served five years at least at the Body following his qualification. The granting of membership is by decision from secretary of the People's Committee for the Body.

Article Forty-Nine: Appointment, promotion, transfer, attachments, acceptance of resignations, and termination of service of the Body's deputies, members, and administrative and technical staff is by a decision from the secretary of the People's Committee for the Body and according to the provisions of this law and the regulations governing it.

Article Fifty: Secretary of the People's Committee for the Body, its deputies and members have the capacity of judicial control men as regards the execution of the provisions of this law. This capacity may be granted by a decision from the secretary of the People's Committee for the Body to the officials whose work nature requires them to have it.

Article Fifty-One: Before starting their jobs members of the Body must take the oath to perform their duties honestly. The executory regulation of this law sets out the oath text and the body the oath is made before.

Article Fifty-Two: A committee shall be set up for the affairs of the officials and members of the Body according to a decision by the secretary of the People's Committee of the Control Body. It will directly assume all the jurisdictions and authorizations which will be entrusted with according to the provisions of the executory statute of this Law and the statute pertaining to the affairs of the members and officials of the Control Body.

Article Fifty-Three: Members and officials of the Body are not allowed to couple their positions with any other duty that contravenes their performance of their original duties even if that is done outside office hours.

Article Fifty-Four: Without infringing the provisions of Law No. 10 for the year 1423 regarding purge, and in cases when a person is not caught red-handed committing a crime, no arrest of and no investigation should be conducted with any member of the Body, or bringing a criminal case against him unless this is done with a written permission from the secretary of the People's Committee of the Body. In a case when a member is caught red-handed the secretary of the People's Committee should be notified within the 24 hours that follow the arrest.

Article Fifty-Five: The Body shall prepare the chart outlining the employment structure of its members and officials, in which the names of the positions and their grades shall be determined on the basis of table No. 1 attached to Law No. 15 for 1981 regarding the system of salaries for the Libyan nationals working in the Socialist People Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah. Employment and financial situations of those who are in the service of the Body at the time of the publication of this law shall be settled by transferring each one of them from their current grades to the grades shown against that according to the tables attached to this Law. Any (?increases) decided in general for the benefit of all State officials shall be applied to the salaries of those working at the Body, according to the same conditions and percentages.

Article Fifty-Six: Those working in the Body shall have the right to medical and social welfare and the cost of medical treatment. They will also be compensated for any injuries or diseases they may sustain during their employment or as a result of it and which are not attributed to their own personal error. The executory statute of this Law outlines all the necessary bases and regulations including determining the amount of compensation.

Article Fifty-Seven: The career of any person working for the General People's Committee for the Body will come to and end when they reach the age of 62 years. Should public interest make it necessary for him to stay longer, then their service can be extended till they are 65 years old following a decision of extension taken by the General People's Committee for the Body. Any of the Body's employees may go on retirement, should they wish to do so, when they have had at least 20 years of service.

Article Fifty-Eight: When the Body's employees come to the end of their career, they should get compensation for their accumulated annual leave, on the condition that this does not exceed the value of only one-year's salary and that the accumulation of leave was due to reasons related to the interest of the service.

Article Fifty-Nine: A fund should be set up by the Body and called the workers' fund. The role of this fund is to provide social, cultural and health protection for the workers and give them assistance and rewards. The resources of the fund come from the following:

- Annual subscription and membership fees.

- The Body's contribution as mentioned in the annual budget.
- The sum total of salary cuts imposed on the Body's employees.
- Any unconditional assistance or donations given to it.
- Any other resources determined by the secretary of the General People's Committee for the Body.

The organization of the fund, its administration and any usage of its funds are based on a decision issued by the secretary of the People's Committee for the Body.

Article Sixty: The disciplinary measures which could be taken against the members of the Body are:

First: Rebuke

Second: Warning
Third: Salary cut for no more than one month per year
Fourth: Depriving the employee from annual increments.
Fifth: Dismissal from the job

The secretary of the General People's Committee for the Body signs the rebuke, warning or salary cut decision within fifteen days. The salary cut punishment can only be signed after having heard the statement of the accused and ensuring his defense through a three-member committee which is formed according to a decision by the secretary of the People's Committee for the Body. The grades of the members of this committee should not be lower than that of the accused person under investigation.

Article Sixty-One: The employees of the Body are liable to come under investigation by the Body members, and they may be disciplined and punished in accordance with the provisions of the civil service law.

Article Sixty-Two: The members of the Body may not be sacked unless any of them loses the trust and consideration required by the job, and has been sentenced by the ad-hoc disciplinary court.

Article Sixty-Three: A disciplinary trial of secretaries and members of the Body shall take place before a council consisting of a counsellor of the High Court, appointed as chairman by the court's general assembly, a counsellor of the Appeal Court, appointed as member by the court's general assembly, and a member appointed from amongst the members of the Body. The person to be tried shall be referred to the trial by the secretary of the people's committee of the Body. The disciplinary procedure of the trial is given by the executive provisions of this law.

Article Sixty-Four: The employees of the Body come under the provisions of the civil service law issued by law No. 55 of 1976, and law No. 15 of 1981 concerning salary regulations for citizens of the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah, unless special provisions have been made in the law.

Chapter 4: Budget and accounts.

Article Sixty-Five: The Body will have an annual assessable and independent budget which will be prepared at least three months before the financial year. Its financial year will begin with that of the government's and will end with it. The budget is drawn upon that of the GPC's [General Peoples Congress].

Article Sixty-Six: The resources allocated to the Body's budget consist of:

1: funds which will be allocated to the Body in the government's budget;

2: revenues from auditing, control, financial and technical consultations paid for by the parties which come under its control;

3: savings from previous annual budgets;

4: any other revenues allocated to the Body.

Article Sixty-Seven: The Body's accounts, spending procedures, revenues and other financial matters are regulated according to the regulations and the rules of the executive motion of the present law.

Article Sixty-Eight: The secretary of the people's committee for the Body applies the regulations in force for the General People's Financial Committee with reference to the spending of the allocated funds within the Body's budget.

Article Sixty-Nine: The Body will have an account or more at the operating banks in the Jamahiriyah by decree from the secretary of the people's committee for the Body.

Article Seventy: The Body's accounts will be audited according to the rules emanating from the decree of the GPC's which will be based on a presentation made by the secretary of the people's committee for the Body. Its definitive balance will be approved by the GPC.

Article Seventy-One: The Body shall receive fees in return for work done in examining accounts, auditing the budget, examining contracts, providing financial and technical advice, and preparing financial and accountancy systems for the institutions subjected to control mentioned in Article 5 of this law. The people's committees and other public bodies and institutions which are paid directly from the general budget of the state are exempted from the fees in question, when the Body examines and audits their annual accounts.

Chapter 5: On the Disciplinary Council of Financial Contraventions.

Article Seventy-Two: In accordance with the provisions of this law, a disciplinary council shall be set up, named the Disciplinary Council for Financial Contraventions which shall try employees of the institutions which come under the control of the Body for any financial contraventions committed in violation of the provisions of the state financial system law, other relevant motions issued under this law, and the financial contraventions mentioned in this law and the civil service law. The disciplinary council shall also try cases involving financial contraventions of laws, motions, decisions, regulations, and other legislations regulating work at the institutions that come under the control of the Body.

Article Seventy-Three: The disciplinary council shall consist of:

1: A member of the justice sector whose rank shall not be lower than counsellor of the appeal courts, proposed as chairman by the general assembly of the ad-hoc court.

2: A financial civil servant of the General People's Committee for Finance, proposed as member by the secretary of the General People's Committee for Finance.

3: A member of the law administration of the General People's Committee for Justice and Public Security, proposed as member by the secretary of the General People's Committee for Justice and Public Security.

4: A civil servant of the General Board for Manpower, proposed as member by the secretary of the committee of administration of the board.

5: Two members of Body.

The grade of members of the council shall be no lower than grade 13, and if a member of the council was to be referred to a disciplinary trial, then he shall be replaced by a civil servant of the institution in which he works. On the other hand, other councils may be set up by decision of the secretary of the people's committee of the Body, and the prerogatives of each council and its setting up shall be in accordance with the provisions of this article.

Article Seventy-Four: The council shall hold its meetings at the premises of the Body or in any of the latter's branches, and its sessions shall be correct only if attended by at least its chairman and three of its members. Its sessions shall be secret and decisions shall be taken by majority vote, and in the event of equal votes the decision backed by the chairman shall prevail. A Decision of the council must mention the reasons why it had been taken, and it must be conveyed to the concerned person within 15 days from the date it was taken. A decision by the council is final and must be challenged only before high courts.

Article Seventy-Five: Testimony before the disciplinary council shall take place after taking the oath, and witnesses shall be dealt with in cases of absence, refusing to testify and false testimonies, in accordance with the relevant provisions in the penal law and criminal law procedures before the criminal court. The council shall have the authority decided upon at the criminal court.

Article Seventy-Six: If related contraventions, some of which are administrative and the others are financial, are attributed to one official or more than one the disciplinary council for financial contraventions would have jurisdiction over the trial.

Article Seventy-Seven: Without infringing on the disciplinary punishment stated in the civil service law or any other heavier penal punishment stipulated by the penal code or any other law the disciplinary council may punish with a financial fine anyone violating the provisions of Article Eighty-Three of this law or any other financial violation resulting in wasting public money or harming the public interest provided that the fine is no less than one month's salary and does not exceed three months' salary. In executing this punishment what is meant by the salary is the salary the accused receives at the time of committing the contravention without any bonuses or other financial advantages. The same punishment is to be applied to anyone who has left service for whatsoever reason even if investigation with him had begun before the end of service in cases of violations resulting in spending money inappropriately, wasting any of the State's financial rights or causing damage to the public interest.

Chapter Six: General and Transitional Rulings:

Article Seventy-Eight: Without violating the provisions of Article Five of this law the Body may examine and audit the accounts and budgets of the branches of the foreign companies operating in the Great Jamahiriyah and ratify their budgets and final accounts and submitting reports on them to the company's competent branch and its head office abroad. The fees, criteria, and principles of examination and audit are to be determined according to the provisions of the executory provision of this law.

Article Seventy-Nine: After consulting with the competent bodies the secretary of the People's Committee may suggest draft regulations he sees a need for their prescription to safeguard the good execution of the provisions of this law and other effective legislations, especially the draft regulations needed to show the correct ways for bookkeeping, protecting contracts or the State's public properties, or for examining and auditing accounts which the Body is responsible for their audit.

Article Eighty:

1: The institutions that come under the control of the Body shall be committed to study the remarks and queries made by the Body and to respond to them within the fixed delay.

2: Any civil servant that conceals from the Body the clarifications asked by it, refuses to give such clarifications or to inform it about them shall be subjected to disciplinary punishment, without violation of provisions of articles 33, 37, and 83 of this law.

3: Any one who, without an acceptable excuse, fails to respond on time to the remarks or written communications made by the Body, overlooks replying to them, or refuses to respond if summoned to give his views, shall be subjected to disciplinary punishment, and so shall anyone who commits any of the financial contraventions mentioned in article 83 of this law.

Article Eighty-One: The General People's Committee, the qualitative general people's committees, and the people's committees of the communes are required to fax minutes of their meetings and decisions to the Body, and the institutions that come under the provisions of this law must fax to the Body copies of their mail concerning financial commitments. Likewise, the Body must fax minutes of the meetings of its people's committee and its regulatory decisions to the secretariat of the General People's Congress.

Article Eighty-Two: The Body may ask for the help of the police and the local people's security to assume the tasks required by the need to implement the provisions of this law.

Article Eighty-Three: The following are considered financial contraventions in the carrying out of the provisions of this law:

1: Contravening the financial and accountancy rules, regulations and systems, or their implementation, or the bases of their preparation or the instructions and directives issued concerning them.

2: Violating the rules of contracts, storage, purchases, as well as financial and accountancy motions and regulations.

3: Any wrongdoing or negligence resulting in the spending of amounts of public money illegally or causing the loss of the financial rights of the state or the institutions that come under the control of the Body.

4: Failure to convey to the Body photocopies of contracts and agreements, or any documents whose sending to the Body is necessary for the implementation of this law.

5: Failure to convey to the Body, without an acceptable excuse, the necessary statement of accounts or documents in order to pass them.

6: Failure to respond to queries or remarks made by the Body, or to reply to them on time.

7: Failure to take the necessary measures regarding the contraventions mentioned in remarks made by the Body.

8: Concluding contracts that come under the Body's control before their being examined by the Body and the latter making remarks about them.

9: Any action or position liable to obstruct the Body from assuming its prerogatives on financial control.

Article Eighty-Four: All current employees of the General People's Committee for People's Control and Follow-up shall be transferred to the Body with all their same previous functions, in accordance with the provisions of this law.

Article Eighty-Five: As an exemption from the provisions of Article Forty-Seven and Forty-Eight, all the control members working for the General People's Committee for Control and Follow-up shall have the functions already decided for them before this law comes into force.

Article Eighty-Six: The Body shall submit to the basic people's congresses an exhaustive annual report on its work, remarks and recommendations. And, whenever necessary, the Body may submit to the concerned quarters reports on issues and subjects revealed by control action, which it deems so important and serious as requiring urgent attention.

Article Eighty-Seven: The secretary of the people's committee of the Body shall assume the prerogatives and duties allocated to the head of the Audit Office and the general controller in the legislation in force, while the secretary of the Body at the financial control office shall assume the prerogatives and duties allocated to the secretary of the Audit Office in the legislation in force. Likewise, the secretary of the Body at the administrative control office and the secretary of the Body at the investigation office shall assume the prerogatives and duties allocated to the secretaries of the central body for general administrative control in the legislation in force.

Article Eighty-Eight: All issues tabled before the disciplinary council for financial contraventions when this law comes into force shall be referred to the disciplinary council set up in accordance with the provisions of this law so long as these issues have not already been decided upon.

Article Eighty-Nine: Motions and executive decisions shall continue to be in force, issued in accordance with the provisions of the legislation carried out by the General People's Committee for People's Control and Follow-up, so long as the provisions of this law are not contravened, until other provisions are issued which would amend or cancel them.

Article Ninety: The executive motion of this law shall be issued by decision of the secretariat of the General People's Congress.

Article Ninety-One: Law No. 79 of 1975 is abolished, concerning the Audit Office, as well as law No. 88 of 1974 regulating the central body for general administrative control, and law No. 16 of 1986 setting up the people's follow-up body. Also abolished are the provisions of Chapter 7 of the Law on the State Financial Law, the provisions of Article 88 of the Civil Service Law, and any other provision contravening the provisions of this law.

Article Ninety-Two: This law shall be published in the Official Gazette and in the various media organs, and it shall come into force on the date of its publication in the Official Gazette.

[Signed] The General People's Congress.

[Dated] Issued on 24 Ramadan corresponding to 13 February 1425 after the birth of the prophet [year as given] [13 February 1996].

Morocco

Morocco: Iraqi Vice President Ramadan Arrives in Rabat

JN0703095296 Baghdad INA in Arabic
0710 GMT 7 March 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Rabat, 7 Mar (INA)—Taha Yasin Ramadan, Iraqi vice president and personal envoy of President Saddam Husayn to his brother His Majesty King Hassan II of Morocco, arrived here last night on a visit to Morocco. The visit is part of the Iraqi vice president's tour of a number of Arab Maghreb states.

In a statement to the INA correspondent in Rabat, Taha Yasin Ramadan said that he will convey a message from President Saddam Husayn to his brother His Majesty King Hassan II concerning the current developments, Iraq's relations with the UN Security Council, and Iraq's regional relations. He said he will also discuss cooperation between the two sisterly states.

The vice president noted that continued meetings and consultations among the Arab leaders are needed to maintain our pan-Arab ties. This, he said, has for several years now been the character of the relationship between Iraq and Morocco and between President Saddam Husayn and His Majesty King Hassan II.

President Saddam Husayn's personal envoy was received at the airport by Abdellatif Filali, Moroccan prime minister and foreign minister; Noureddine Benomar, environment minister; senior civic and military officials; and Dr. Nadim Ahmad al-Yasin, Iraq's ambassador to Morocco and the embassy staff.

Morocco: Opposition Leader Positive on King Hassan's Speech

LD0603133496 Rabat MAP in English 1248 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Rabat, March 6 (MAP) — Leader of one of the main opposition parties in Morocco, M'hamed Boucetta, secretary general of the Istiqlal Party has termed "important and positive" the speech delivered March 3 by King Hassan II on the occasion of the throne day and hoped consultations on reforms would start soon.

In an interview Wednesday to the London-based international Arabic daily AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, M'hamed Boucetta, the first political leader to react to the king's speech, said "we have welcomed the royal speech with optimism".

The monarch announced in his speech the creation this year of a bicameral parliament made up of a House of Representatives and a Senate and the reform of the administration. He also pledged the government will continue the nationwide campaigns against smuggling and drug-trafficking.

M'hamed Boucetta who served in the past as foreign minister and whose party participated in various governments since the country's independence before it joined the opposition few years ago, said this year will be decisive in view of the projected constitutional, political and socio-economic reforms. "I have explained in the past that the reforms announced by his majesty constitute the beginning of the end of the crisis", he told the daily.

Boucetta whose party form with three other parties the "Democratic Bloc", said that considering what his majesty declared in a previous speech, "we are expecting consultations on the projected reforms to start soon". The reform of the Constitution has been made necessary in the perspective of alternation in power wished by the monarch and also by the opposition. The other reforms concerning sectors such as education, administration and economy have also proved to be necessary mostly after the publishing of a World Bank report terming the situation in these sectors as "alarming".

On the issue of the Sahara, Boucetta told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the king tackled this question with "clarity and resolution" and wished that "this year we will reach a final settlement". "Morocco's stance lies, as was recalled by his majesty, on the attachment to the sole U.N. peace plan" Boucetta added.

The issue of Western Sahara, a former Spanish colony recovered by Morocco in 1975 under the Madrid accords, is being dealt with by the United Nations which has been planning for years to organize a referendum to determine the future of this territory whose independence is claimed by the Algerian-backed guerrilla movement "Polisario".

Sudan

Sudan: Voting Begins in Parliamentary, Presidential Elections

EA0603195496 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Voting in parliamentary and presidential elections began today in all states of Sudan and will continue until 17 March. Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir, president of the Republic, today cast his vote at the airport mosque, number one center, in southern Khartoum constituency. [passage omitted]

Sudan: Refusing al-Bashir Message, Numayri Rejects Contact, Talks

MM0603163896 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 6 Mar 96 p 2

[Unattributed report: "Numayri Refuses Message From al-Bashir"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT — An authoritative source in former Sudanese

President Ja'far Numayri's office has confirmed that a delegation of Sudanese businessmen which recently arrived in Cairo has made contact with Numayri's Cairo office for the purpose of meeting with the former president and conveying to him an oral message from Sudanese President 'Umar al- Bashir. The source said that the delegation was surprised by a statement issued the same day by the Alliance of the People's Work Force [Tahaluf Quwa al-Sha'b al-'Amilah], led by Numayri, and refusing the principle of dialogue with the "al-Turabi-al-Bashir regime." The delegation was told that former President Numayri is in the United States. The delegation requested his address, but the office refused to grant their request. The source said that the office contacted Numayri in the United States and informed him of what had happened concerning the government delegation. Numayri told his office that he rejects any contact or negotiation with the al-Bashir regime, and considered the statement issued to that effect final, pointing out that this is his organization's position and that their main political objective is to topple the regime.

Bahrain

Bahrain: Explosion in 'Isa City Kills 1, Wounds 2

JN0703073596 Manama WAKH in Arabic
0718 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Manama, 7 Mar (WAKH)—An explosion in the city of 'Isa last night killed one person and injured two others, one seriously.

WAKH learned that the explosion occurred at about 2200 last night in an automated teller machine of a local bank in the city of 'Isa. A responsible security source in the Ministry of Interior said the security forces rushed to the scene of the incident and began investigations. A statement will be issued as soon as these investigations are concluded.

[Paris AFP in English at 0603 GMT on 7 March adds: "It was the first such fatality since a wave of political unrest erupted in December 1994. Security forces rushed to the scene after the explosion late Wednesday at an automatic teller machine in Madinat 'Isa, just south of the capital Manama, an official source was quoted as saying. One of the injured was reported in serious condition. The report did not identify the cause of the blast, but this year bombs have exploded at two luxury hotels, the parking lot of a shopping mall and outside the offices of a local newspaper. Only the bombing at the Diplomat Hotel caused casualties, leaving two Bahrainis and a Sri Lankan injured."]

Bahrain: Amir Says Situation in Country 'Stable, Reassuring'

JN0603214496 Manama WAKH in Arabic
1435 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] London, 6 Mar (WAKH) — His Highness Shaykh 'Isa Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, amir of Bahrain, asserted that the situation in Bahrain is stable and reassuring, thanks to the cooperation between the people and security officials in outlawing and tracking saboteurs.

In an interview with the London-based AL-HAWADITH magazine, his highness said security men managed to deal with the acts of sabotage and explosions in the country in accordance with the law. The confessions made by the defendants during interrogation showed that these acts were planned abroad with the cooperation of foreign parties.

His highness added that these acts are alien to the people of Bahrain, noting that some acts of sabotage were committed by some groups whose life is devoted to sabotage. His highness said the Shura Council is a good form of popular participation in Bahrain. He pointed out that this model is being developed in planned stages that suit the Bahraini community and the aspirations of the people.

His highness the amir reaffirmed that Bahrain is a unified family that resolves its own problems within the framework of the one family. This family does not allow any foreign interference in its private affairs. [passage omitted]

Commenting on Iraq, the amir of Bahrain said: What is happening in Iraq is a domestic affair. His highness hoped that Iraq would enjoy stability and overcome its ordeal for the good of its people. He also hoped that Iraq would recover and reoccupy its Arab position for the good of the Arab nation. The amir of Bahrain hoped that Iraq would quickly respond to all UN resolutions to have the sanctions lifted and end the difficult circumstances. [passage omitted]

Bahrain: Opposition Statement Views Regime's 'Reign of Terror'

NC0703124996 Paris AFP in English
1134 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Nicosia, March 7 (AFP)—A Bahraini opposition group on Thursday [7 March] accused the government in Manama of launching a "reign of terror" to crush a popular movement and warned of a violent showdown with the authorities.

Interior ministry forces in the last month have laid siege to scores of Shiite villages, made arbitrary arrests, looted and broken into homes, the London-based Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain (IFLB) said.

"The mass detentions includes women and young boys, severe torture and killings of innocent civilians have been ordered by the head of the security apparatus, the British officer Ian Henderson," it said in a statement.

"This collective punishment could escalate into a violent confrontation between the unarmed civilians and heavily armed mercenaries," the IFLB said.

But there seems to be "no prospects of an imminent end to the strife" as Manama tries to stop the movement and the people are "in no mood" to compromise their goal of "political change toward democracy and freedom," it said.

Unrest erupted in December 1994 after the Sunni-led authorities arrested a Shiite Muslim cleric who called for the restoration of parliament suspended in 1975.

Bahrain: Leading Citizens Seek Release of Political Prisoners

NC0603205296 Paris AFP in English 1922 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Nicosia, March 6 (AFP) — Former MPs, lawyers and journalists were among 107 Bahrainis to demand the immediate release of political prisoners in the Gulf state, in a petition received here Wednesday [6 March].

The group singled out Sunni Moslem lawyer Ahmad al-Shamlan, a signatory along with five other opposition figures of a petition calling for the restoration of parliament.

Shamlan, who was arrested February 7, stands accused of "collaboration with extremist organisations based abroad."

The latest petition urged the authorities in Bahrain to "free all political prisoners and allow the return to Bahrain of all the people" deported from the emirate.

Among those who signed the petition, sent to the Sunni-led authorities and widely circulated, were former MPs 'Ali Kassem Rabia, a Sunni, and Mohsen Marhoun, a Shiite Moslem.

Bahrain has been hit by 14 months of unrest led by Shiites demanding the restoration of parliament which was suspended in 1975.

Qatar

Qatar: EU Envoy Warns Velayati Visit 'Inappropriate'

MM0603134196 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 6 Mar 96 pp 1, 6

[Report by Muhammad al-Makki Ahmad: "European-U.S. Alarm Over Qatari-Iranian Rapprochement"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Paris, AL-HAYAH — AL-HAYAH has learned from a Western diplomatic source in the French capital that the Italian ambassador in Doha (head of the European ambassadors group) and his European colleagues met last week with Qatari Foreign Minister Shaykh Hamad Jasim Bin-Jabr Al Thani at the request of the minister, who wanted to criticize some neighboring Gulf states which he accused of being behind the attempted coup said to have been foiled by Doha.

The source said that the Italian ambassador pointed out to the Qatari minister that the EU wanted Qatar to work to improve its relations with its neighbors and informed the minister that the timing of Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati's anticipated visit to Doha was inappropriate, especially with the regard to the need for Qatar to improve its relations with neighboring states.

The source added that the U.S. Administration was also displeased about the Velayati visit to Doha and would be informing the Qatari authorities of its position.

Meanwhile the Qatari foreign minister has received a written message from Yusuf Bin-'Alawi Bin-'Abdallah, Oman minister of state for foreign affairs, dealing with "relations between the two countries and developments on the Gulf scene." [passage omitted]

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia: 'Immigrants' Back al-Mas'ari in CDLR Split

MM0703113796 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 7 Mar 96 pp 1, 4

[Report by 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Khamis: "War of Leaflets and Statements Between al-Mas'ari and al-Faqih"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London — Disagreements within the Saudi "Rights" group [Committee for the Defense of Legitimate Rights, CDLR] in London have developed and escalated despite all that has been said about attempts by various tendencies in the [Islamic] Liberation Party [hizb al-tahrir], in addition to fundamentalist and leftist groups, to hold meetings between Dr. Sa'd al-Faqih and Muhammad al-Mas'ari to reconcile them. Their efforts have run into an escalation in the attacks and criticisms exchanged between the two sides.

Saudi dissident Sa'd al-Faqih issued a statement yesterday dismissing Dr. Muhammad al-Mas'ari as official spokesman of the so-called CDLR of Saudi Arabia. Al-Faqih said that the CDLR is not responsible for any statement or action by al-Mas'ari, and that it has decided to assign him — that is, al-Faqih — the duties of official spokesman and to regard him as the sole representative of the Committee.

Al-Faqih pointed out that the Committee will later publish the background to and justifications for this decision, stressing that its activities will continue without interruption, unaffected by al-Mas'ari's absence. He added that no change has occurred in the methods of communication with the Committee.

Al—Mas'ari responded by saying that "al-Faqih exposed himself when he exploited my presence in Glasgow to change the office locks. I have sent him a warning through British Member of Parliament George Galloway to allow me to enter the office."

Al-Mas'ari said: "Sa'd al-Faqih accused my mother of bringing women home for me after he saw a woman to whom I had wanted to be engaged enter my house in London to see my mother, when I was not in the house. His mental state must have deteriorated over recent months to make such statements. An acquaintance of his recorded some statements by al-Faqih, speaking ill of me. When his acquaintance told me about it, I said he was a liar, so he wanted to swear on the Koran, but I requested a record of these accusations."

On the contradiction concerning the use of the Committee's name in the future, al-Mas'ari said: "The brothers are trying to solve the problem!"

He added: "We are trying to sort out the situation, and there are mediators trying to reduce al-Faqih's dirty washing, as he has started to use dirty methods and make vile statements. He is telling the West that I have links with international terrorism, with those inside [Saudi Arabia], and with the Shi'ah and al-Mu'tazalah [theological school which introduced speculative dogmatism into Islam].

On the Committee's office and its equipment al-Mas'ari said: "The issue will be settled through negotiation or through the courts. Mediators are making efforts."

Commenting on what has happened between al-Mas'ari and al-Faqih, Saudi Ambassador to Britain Dr. Ghazi al-Qusaybi told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that "the two have begun to violate one another's legitimate rights."

For his part, Immigrants Movement [harakat al-muhajirin] leader 'Umar Bakri Muhamma — a Syrian national living in Britain who was previously leader of the Islamic Liberation Party, which dismissed him, and then established the movement with which al-Faqih accused al-Mas'ari of cooperating — stressed that al-Mas'ari had joined the group recently, after its [recent] establishment. Bakri said that "al-Faqih has wrong ideas about the movement and about al-Mas'ari," whose participation in a rally held by the Immigrants Movement on 3 March was one of the causes of the escalation in the disagreement between al-Mas'ari and al-Faqih.

'Umar Bakri said that the harmony between al-Faqih and al-Mas'ari has collapsed because their work is not based on strong foundations, and that they worked for a certain aim and were united only in their hostility toward the Saudi regime.

Bakri added that the Immigrants Movement adopted al-Mas'ari, who was a member of the Liberation Party before he was sent to prison, and that when he arrived in Britain and set up the CDLR office his membership was canceled because the party does not allow its members to operate under another umbrella. This is why his membership was frozen. During his work in the party al-Mas'ari kept a low profile.

'Umar Bakri stressed that the Immigrants Movement is an ideological extension of the Liberation Party. The only difference between them is the method of work.

On al-Faqih's objecting to al-Mas'ari's joining the Immigrants Movement, Bakri said that al-Mas'ari was invited to join the Immigrants. He did not ask to join the movement, and al-Faqih's accusations are untrue.

He pointed out that al-Mas'ari's name is included in the leadership committee, a supreme shura council in the movement, which he [Bakri] and a number of his comrades established. He said: "Al-Mas'ari is an adviser to us in the movement. He is not a founder of the Immigrants Movement. We need someone like al-Mas'ari."

He pointed out that the Immigrants Movement is a blend of the Liberation Party, the Conveyance group, the [Muslim] Brotherhood, and the Islamic Group of Pakistan, that al-Faqih caused al-Mas'ari to come to the movement, and that the movement had distributed al-Mas'ari's statement against al-Faqih.

On his interpretation of the split between al-Mas'ari and al-Faqih, 'Umar Bakri said: "It means that the CDLR has no ideological foundation, and that it was set up for a certain aim. This is why it has weakened and collapsed. We had always told al-Mas'ari: Al-Faqih is Ikhwani [of Brotherhood] in his orientation and you are a Liberationist. An Ikhwani coexists with the reality while a Liberationist changes the reality. Al-Mas'ari now effectively has no links with al-Faqih, and vice versa. We do not know what the CDLR's status is now. Their hatred for Saudi Arabia [as published] rebounded on them and they now hate one another."

He pointed out that al-Mas'ari will from now on contribute to movement action inside the Immigrants group, just as he did in the Liberation Party, and that the Immigrants will back and support him. Bakri said that he has invited al-Mas'ari to use the Immigrants Movement's offices.

'Umar Bakri added that "the Immigrants Movement will work to set up an Islamic caliphate in Pakistan and India in cooperation with its supporters in the Indian subcontinent because of the availability of the components of action [muqawwimat al-'amal] — such as nuclear and other weapons — there."

Saudi Arabia: More on CDLR Split, Afghan Mediation Efforts

MM0703122196 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 7 Mar 96 p 1

[Unattributed report: "British Police Impound Equipment of Dissidents Committee"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London, AL-HAYAH — AL-HAYAH has learned from informed sources that yesterday morning the British police entered the office of the Committee for the Defense of Legitimate Rights [of Saudi Arabia, CDLR] in a London district following the escalation in the dispute between Dr. Muhammad al-Mas'ari and Dr. Sa'd al-Faqih. The former accuses the latter of financial and administrative irregularities, while the latter accuses the former of belonging to a party accused of terrorism.

The sources said that the policemen confiscated all the electronic printing and distribution equipment, taking them to "a neutral place" until the issues concerning the split between al-Mas'ari and al-Faqih are settled. The sources quoted a policeman as saying that the equipment will only be released by a court decision if the dispute between the two parties continues.

Dr. al-Faqih declined to comment on the news when AL-HAYAH contacted him by telephone. He just said that the two parties concerned (al-Mas'ari and al-Faqih) had agreed to stop making statements pending the outcome of the "good offices" being made by some parties to mend the rift and reduce the disagreements.

AL-HAYAH has learned that Afghan quarters are making mediation efforts, and that these quarters have applied financial pressure to prevent the two parties from continuing the campaigns [against each other] and the exchange of accusations. Sources close to the Committee have said that "Afghan financial aid" is the backbone of al-Mas'ari's and al-Faqih's activities.

The sources expect the campaigns to be halted as a result of these mediations and pressures, but the proposed formula is for the two parties to work separately. As for the ownership of the electronic and other equipment, the issue will be settled through mediation or through a decision of the British courts.

At the financial level, it has also become clear that al-Mas'ari has issued a check for the sum of $50,000 to the lawyer who defended his case against the decision to deport him.

It seems that this check is uncovered because the funds are under al-Faqih's control. Al-Faqih continues to refuse to settle the financial issue — which means that the lawyer could file a suit against al-Mas'ari to recover his rights.

Other sources say that the printing of the last issue of the magazine AL-SHAR'IYAH, published by al-Mas'ari and al-Faqih, has been completed, but it is still being held in al-Mas'ari's house, as al-Mas'ari insists on not distributing it now in the context of the exacerbation of relations between him and al-Faqih.

The sources expect the two parties — if the dispute continues — to reveal the secrets of the Committee's financing and contacts with extremist organizations.

Yemen

Yemen: Iraqi Information Minister Arrives With Saddam's Message

JN0703095796 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0715 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Sanaa, 7 Mar (INA)—'Abd-al-Ghani 'Abd-al-Ghafur, Iraqi culture and information minister and President Saddam Husayn's envoy to Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, arrived here last night.

In a statement to the INA correspondent in Sanaa, 'Abd-al-Ghani 'Abd-al-Ghafur said he carries a message from President Saddam Husayn to his brother President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih.

The president's envoy said his visit to Yemen falls within the context of the strong ties between the two sisterly states. He said he will convey the greetings of the Iraqi president, leadership, and people to the dear Yemeni president, leadership, and people and will assert Iraq's firm principled position toward the Eritrean aggression against Yemen. This position, which was declared by President Saddam Husayn, supports the Yemeni Arab people in their quest to regain the Yemeni island of al-Hanish al-Kabir and face the Eritrean aggression.

He noted that his visit to Yemen also aims to underline to the Yemeni brothers that the Iraq of Arabism and Islam will continue to march on the path of steadfastness and victory, and will continue to face the unfair embargo until God Almighty grants it a clear victory.

The minister voiced best wishes to President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and the Yemeni people of continued progress to serve the Arab nation, which is facing pressures and conspiracies.

He said relations between Iraq and Yemen are genuine, and based on the history and civilization that link the two sisterly states and give them an effective role to play in the service of the Arab nation.

'Abd-al-Ghani 'Abd-al-Ghafur, Iraqi culture and information minister and President Saddam Husayn's envoy, was received upon arrival at Sanaa airport by Yahya al-'Arashi, Yemeni minister of culture and tourism, and Dr. Muhsin Khalil, Iraq's ambassador to Yemen.

Iraq: Military Men Related to Husayn Kamil Asked To Resign

JN0603213996 London AL-WASAT in Arabic 4-10 Mar 96 p 6

[FBIS Translated Text] London — Well-informed Iraqi sources have revealed that the Iraqi Government asked hundreds of officers and military men who were linked to General Husayn Kamil, especially his relatives, to resign from their posts to avoid their reaction after the liquidation of General Kamil and some members of his family.

Dr. Fadil al-Ansari, member of the Ba'th Party National Command in Damascus, told AL-WASAT that recent information from Baghdad indicates that Husayn Kamil and his two brothers were killed during interrogation and not at his sister's house.

Al-Ansari, one of the oldest opposers of President Saddam Husayn's regime, said that ongoing contacts to hold a meeting for Iraqi opposition factions in Damascus have not yet produced ressults despite the dire need to agree on field work within common denominators.

In another development, Major General Wafiq al-Samarra'i, and other Iraqi opposition circles said there is an intention to hold a meeting for approximately 30 Iraqi figures in Damascus in the near future.

After a meeting with Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, al-Samarra'i told AL-WASAT that the opposition leaders have become aware of the need to understand each other's stands because lack of understanding will have serious consequences at a time when the suffering of the Iraqi people continues.

Iraq: 'Regional Disagreements' Blamed for Failure To Oust Saddam

MM0603125396 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 5 Mar 96 p 3

[Report by Wadi' al-Hulw in Damascus: "Al-Samara'i: Regional Disagreements Impede Saddam's Overthrow; We Oppose the Lifting of Sanctions and the 'Oil for Food' Resolution"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Iraqi oppositionist Major General Wafiq al-Samara'i, who has been living in Syria since he fled from Iraq in late 1994, has said that "regional disagreements are impeding (Iraqi President) Saddam Husayn's overthrow."

Al-Samara'i said that due to "the difficulty of the regional situation" around Iraq the situation in Iraq is "complex," in a reference to the six states bordering Iraq, namely Turkey, Iran, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Jordan. He added that these states "do not like Saddam, but their disagreements help Saddam," and that disagreements among them do not help, but prevent "coordination among them to topple him."

In this context he referred especially to the Syrian-Jordanian disagreement, saying that there must be coordination between Syria and Jordan to "ensure the success of the Iraqi opposition's work."

The former Iraqi intelligence chief stressed that the disagreement between Syria and Jordan "exists and could worsen in the next phase," but, in his view, "should end with coordination" between the two countries on the situation in Iraq.

In a statement, the Iraqi "Homeland" Party leader Mish'an al-Juburi had urged such coordination in order to put an end to the Iraqi people's suffering, caused by "Saddam Husayn remaining in power."

The Iraqi oppositionist [al-Samara'i] said that "after Saddam hit the Shiites, the Kurds, and the Sunnis, executed his sons-in-law, and removed his brothers (Barzan, who is in Geneva, Sab'awi, the former director of public security, and Watban, the former interior minister), Saddam can now only benefit from the regional and Arab disagreements."

After saying that he feels confident that "the United States wants to topple Saddam," al-Samara'i added: "We see no reason for delaying his overthrow. We can provide what is required if circumstances allow."

The former Iraqi intelligence chief ruled out "a civil war breaking out" in the event that the Iraqi opposition launches a military campaign to topple Saddam or remove him from power, and added as an afterthought: "Even it did happen, it would end quickly."

During the interview, he denied asking the Syrian authorities to open the borders with Iraq. Al-Juburi had said that both he and Maj. Gen. al-Samara'i had met with Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam and asked him to "open the Syrian borders to Iraqis."

Al-Samara'i stressed that he is "against" opening the borders with Iraq because Saddam Husayn "would benefit from that, albeit marginally," and said that he demands that "the sanctions be maintained" on Iraq and that the Iraqi President should not be allowed "to remain longer [in power]" through Resolution 986 (issued by the Security Council, on Iraq selling some of its oil to purchase food and medical supplies).

On whether the opposition is capable of toppling the current regime in Baghdad, he said "the opposition can do it, because the people support the opposition," but added that "if the opposition is unable to do it, this would be due to the regional disagreements."

He explained that the Iraqi opposition "receives no Arab assistance enabling it to prepare itself for launching a military campaign aimed at toppling" the regime and added that "so far, there are only Arab attempts aimed at polarizing the opposition."

On the Jordanian call to the Iraqi opposition, al-Samara'i said that "the Jordanian arena is very important" and stressed that "there is no reason why we should tell Jordan that we do not want to cooperate with it, and we cannot say no to someone who offers help."

He said that he had sent a message to Jordanian Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti, but he did not reveal its contents.

Al-Samara'i, who leads the "Iraqi National Movement," stressed that "any quarter working seriously to escalate the situation against Saddam will have the Iraqi people's support, achieve great success, and gain advantages in Iraq through assuming that role."

He added that "change is possible and expected, if we are given the opportunity, and Saddam will fall within three months. However if the disagreements continue, this might extend Saddam's life, not by much, just months."

He pointed out that there is the intention to hold an Iraqi opposition congress in Damascus, and that it "might take place during the second half of March."

He called for "a democratic, pluralist, and free" regime in Iraq, stressing that "there will be no stability without democracy."

He added that there is coordination with some of the Iraqi opposition factions, including the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, led by Jalal al-Talabani, the Iraqi National Congress (Iraqi factions and figures based in London), the National Accord Movement (led by Iyyad 'Alawi), the Supreme Assembly for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (based in Tehran and led by Ayatollah Baqir al-Hakim), and the Islamic Action Organization (Muhammad Taqiyy al-Madrasi).

Iraq: Regime Said To Fear Accepting UN Resolution Would 'End' Its Role

NC0603161996 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1430 GMT 6 Mar 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] In a new development in the positions of the Saddamite regime, Taha Yasin Ramadan, the deputy of tyrant Saddam, denied during his tour of the Arab Maghreb countries that the regime had accepted UN Security Council Resolution 986. Not only that, but he reiterated that the resolution endangers Iraq's sovereignty.

The resolution allows Iraq to export $1 billion worth of oil every three months to buy food and medicine, provided that the United Nations supervises the sale of oil and the purchase and distribution of food. The resolution allocates part of the oil revenues to meet the expenses of the UN Special Commission on Iraq's disarmament and to pay war reparations.

The regime rejected the resolution after its issuance in April 1995 [as heard]. But on 19 February 1996, the regime changed its position and formally accepted the resolution. On the basis of this, talks between an Iraqi delegation and the United Nations began on 6 March, but no results have been achieved.

The talks failed because the regime was maneuvering over the implementation of the resolution and because it was not serious during the talks. Having felt strangled, the regime needed to secure hard currency from the citizens. It therefore announced amid huge publicity its acceptance of the resolution. Through this theatrical tactic, the regime managed to buy the hard currency from citizens. It then returned to its old position, without achieving any result in the talks with the United Nations.

The main reason for the regime's failure to comply with the UN resolution is not its principled position on the resolution. In fact, the regime accepted tougher resolutions, ones that violated Iraq's sovereignty more flagrantly. The main reason for the regime's nonacceptance of this resolution seems to be its fear that an acceptance would deprive it of the very card it may use to stay in power. The regime fears that an acceptance of the UN resolution would mean an end to its role. It is hanging on to power by all means, not caring for the Iraqi people's fate, starvation, and slow death. It is a terrorist regime, and there is no way out other than eliminating this fascist regime and deleting it from the world map.

Iraq: National Assembly Expresses Solidarity With Cuba

JN0603122996 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1050 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 6 Mar (INA)—The Iraqi National Assembly expressed its deep concern over the United States' frequent violations of Cuba's airspace and territorial waters since 1994. It also expressed its full solidarity with the Cuban people and leadership in confronting these aggressive acts.

In a statement issued today, the National Assembly said: The accumulation of several similar provocations has forced Cuba to defend its sovereignty and people's security strongly in accordance with the provisions of the UN Charter and the rules of the international law.

The U.S Administration's aggressive acts against the sovereignty and freedom of the struggling peoples of the world show this administration's indifference to and disdain of peoples' destinies and legitimate right to independence and national sovereignty.

The assembly expressed its full solidarity with the Cuban people, parliament, and leadership in confronting these aggressive acts, including the use of the weapon of sanctions and the unjust blockade against states, and the exploitation of the UN Security Council and the United Nations to forge facts.

Iraq: Oil Minister Praises Egypt, Views Sanctions, Weapons, POW's

NC0703134296 Cairo MENA in Arabic
1240 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Ankara, 7 Mar (MENA)—Lieutenant General 'Amir Rashid, Iraqi minister of petroleum and military industrialization, has praised Egypt's and President Husni Mubarak's efforts to prevent interference in Iraqi domestic affairs and the partitioning of Iraq. In a statement to a MENA correspondent in Turkey he said Iraq supports President Mubarak's call for achieving Arab reconciliation. He said that efforts must be made to forego the current differences among the Arab countries to serve the Arab nation's interests and to ensure the nation's cohesion.

Rashid said Iraq hopes something positive will occur when the UN Security Council debates in April the sanctions imposed on Iraq. He noted that the death rate of children and old people in Iraq has greatly increased because of the continuing embargo. He noted that babies are now born handicapped and disfigured due to their mothers' malnutrition. He said Iraq has implemented all the UN Security Council resolutions pertaining to it. He pointed out that all weapons of mass destruction in Iraq have been destroyed, noting that the UN ad hoc commission entrusted with this task and the IAEA have acknowledged this.

Discussing the Kuwaiti POW's in Iraq, Rashid said there are Kuwaiti missing and Iraq is prepared to extend every facility to any party searching for the missing. The Iraqi minister has been in Turkey since Monday [4 March] and is discussing with Turkish officials the reoperation of the oil pipeline in Turkey and the supply of oil to Turkey should Iraq and the United Nations reach an agreement on implementing Security Council Resolution 986 on selling Iraqi oil to import food to meet the needs of the Iraqi people.

Iraq: Armed Thieves Steal Egyptian Attache's Car in Baghdad

NC0603215096 Cairo MENA in English
2120 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baghdad, 6 Mar (MENA)—The Egyptian administrative attache at the Egyptian Interests Section here had his car stolen in an armed robbery. Attache al-Sayyid Muhammad 'Amr and a colleague chased the masked robbers for the distance of 80 km outside the capital Baghdad but the robbers managed to escape after firing several shots. The Iraqi authorities displayed interest in the incident and search is under way for the robbers and the stolen car.

Israel: Tanks Reportedly Deployed on Border With West Bank

NC0703084696 Paris AFP in English
0850 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Jerusalem, March 7 (AFP)—Israel has deployed tanks along the edge of its territory with the West Bank for the first time since the Middle East war in 1967, military officials told AFP on Thursday [7 March].

Israel: Official—'No Question' of Launching Operation

NC0703090496 Paris AFP in English
0857 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Jerusalem, March 7 (AFP)—Israel has deployed tanks along the edge of its territory with the West Bank for the first time since the Middle East war in 1967, military officials told AFP on Thursday [7 March].

The tanks were mainly deployed on heights overlooking the Palestinian autonomous towns of Tulkarm and Qalqilyah and their surroundings following a wave of Palestinian militant suicide bombings which have left 60 dead since February 25.

Some 2,00 extra troops and border guards were also deployed in the area to prevent any Palestinians infiltrating into the area from the West Bank which has been closed since the first bombing on February 25.

"There is no question of launching an operation with these tanks but only to overlook the areas to prevent terrorists penetrating Israel to carry out further attacks," the official told AFP.

He added they were fitted with infra-red equipment to detect any night movements by Palestinians.

Israel: Tanks Deployed Along Dividing Line for 'Observation'

TA0703100196 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew
7 Mar 96 p 1

[Report by Yosi Levi]

[FBIS Translated Text] The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] yesterday deployed tanks in Judaea and Samaria along the dividing line between Israel and the territories. The deployment of the tanks was for observation and deterrence purposes.

To the best of my knowledge, this is the first deployment of tanks in the area since 1967.

The tanks were deployed to points commanding the terrain, allowing the use of their special vision equipment. By using this equipment the IDF hopes to improve its ability to spot suspicious movement of Palestinians attempting to infiltrate into Israel.

Senior army sources refused to comment yesterday on the purpose of this deployment. They only said that "there is no intention of the tanks entering into areas in Judaea and Samaria that have already been transferred to the Palestinian Authority (referred to in the Oslo accords as Area A).

The tank deployment is being carried out in the framework of the various measures implemented by the IDF and other security bodies. Major General Ilan Biran, commander of the IDF Central Command, decided to cancel all training of regular units in Judaea and Samaria two days ago — mainly armored corps and infantry units — and order them into the struggle against terrorism.

Israel: Peres Interviewed on Bombings, Elections, Syria

TA0603194596 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1825 GMT 6 Mar 96

[Interview with Prime Minister Shim'on Peres by political correspondent Nisim Mish'al and Arab affairs correspondent Ehud Ya'ari in the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem, and by anchor Hayim Yavin in the studio — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Yavin] Good evening, Mr. Shim'on Peres, prime minister and defense minister.

[Peres] Good evening.

[Yavin] We heard today that Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] has made, through 'Arafat, some very serious offers for an arrangement with Israel. Will you be willing to consider these proposals, or is there going to be a total war against Hamas?

[Peres] Only a fool can believe Hamas.

[Mish'al] Mr. Prime Minister, the terrorist who recruited the suicide bombers said that these attacks had been designed to achieve political objectives — namely, a turnabout in the Israeli elections. It was intervention on behalf of the Likud and against Labor. What do you have to say about this?

[Peres] To tell you quite frankly, his remarks did not surprise me. I never wanted to use this argument, because I did not want to stoke the fire from within. But we now have the full picture. In fact, this development underscores our difficulty in obtaining intelligence information. That man was recruited by Hamas only four weeks ago, as he said, and he is both confused and demented, all of which shows how difficult it is for our intelligence network to obtain information. The other thing is the fact that we have almost the full picture, that people have been put under arrest. We know now what their motives and operational methods were, and that will naturally facilitate our future activity. Furthermore, it explains my own stands, which are composed of three elements: a total war on Hamas; preventing Hamas from ruining our economy, because even when measures are adopted.... [changes thought] Look, I am constantly accused of being aloof. So I am aloof. I have to act responsibly and rationally; I know a country can be derailed in a second. The third element is preventing Hamas from prevailing.

[Ya'ari] Mr. Prime Minister, Knesset Member 'Abd-al-Wahhab al-Darawshah has given you a message from 'Arafat — possibly without 'Arafat's blessing — with a simple proposal from Hamas saying as follows: Let us be, do not persecute us, Israel; we are stopping the attacks. Does this require an answer, and if it does, what kind of an answer?

[Peres] It requires no answer. It is the third paper they have published. The first said they would carry out no operations until 8 March; they did not act on it. Their second paper said they would stop until the elections, and now there is a third one. We can only discuss facts. There is nothing I can do with papers.

[Mish'al] Mr. Prime Minister, I would like to refer to today's report about an Israeli Arab truck driver who drove the terrorist. Do you have additional details about it?

[Peres] I do, but I will not elaborate, because....

[Mish'al, interrupting] Did he know he was driving a terrorist?

[Peres] It is a matter for the attorney general and the judiciary. I do not think I am the man to disclose such details. I will say one thing, however: Accusing all Israeli Arabs of complicity is scandalous. An entire nation cannot be blamed for the sins of one. I visited south Lebanon yesterday, and I saw Arabs, Druze, Bedouin all fighting at our side. Today I visited a base where army officers are trained, and again I saw Arabs and Bedouin and Druze there. We should have great respect for the fact that they acted with restraint and responsibility during Israel's five wars. I received many Israeli Arab delegations who came to condemn the terrorist attacks, and I felt their condemnation was genuine. That single individual should be strongly denounced, but at the same time we should strive as strongly to avoid blaming a whole society.

[Ya'ari] And yet the man is active in, or at least close to, the Israeli Islamic Movement, which is close in its own way to Hamas, the political mother organization. Do you think this requires a probe, an examination?

[Peres] Everything requires an examination, but nothing justifies sweeping accusations. As Jews, we have always rejected anti-Semitism, which was an attempt to blame the whole Jewish people for what may have been the sin of a single Jew, and I do not think we should act differently toward others.

[Mish'al] Sir, was there negligence in the security checks at the exit from the Gaza Strip? We were always told that the Gaza Strip can actually be sealed hermetically.

[Peres] I am no policeman or soldier, so I cannot say. We have the version of the driver, who says he was not inspected; and there is the version of the soldiers, who say he was. It needs to be investigated on the technical and legal level, and it is not up to me to draw instant conclusions.

[Ya'ari] Mr. Prime Minister, do you feel 'Arafat is now making a sincere, serious, and full effort to round up the serious Hamas suspects in the Gaza Strip?

[Peres] He is doing more than he did before, but as long as the commanders of 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam, the Hamas military arm, are not apprehended, I will not rest.

[Ya'ari] Will you retain the closure, the pressure, the curfew on the territories until they are?

[Peres] Yes.

[Ya'ari] Which means that you are practically issuing 'Arafat an ultimatum.

[Peres] No, no, no. Stop making news. I do not have to commit myself to a specific date. We made three demands of 'Arafat: That the terror organizations be outlawed.... [changes thought] I would like to clarify: I am not asking 'Arafat to defend Israel, or to serve Israel. I am merely asking 'Arafat to do in Gaza what Mubarak is doing in Cairo, and what Husayn is doing in Amman: That he prevent the existence of illegal, terrorist, violent organizations alongside the only authoritative rule that is there.

We asked for three things: That they be outlawed — and he has outlawed them; that he disarm them — and he has begun collecting their weapons, although we are still at the start. Furthermore, we gave him a list of 13 names who head the list of wanted men. He has detained some of them, but not their leaders, and as long as the leaders are at large, they are endangering human lives.

[Ya'ari] Is that why the closure continues?

[Peres] That is why the closure continues. I will not make ultimatums or announce dates. It is not my custom either to threaten or [word indistinct]. I can reveal the reasons, but I will keep the targets and dates to myself.

[Mish'al] Mr. Prime Minister, we heard you refer to firm steps, a categorical demand addressed to 'Arafat, closure, curfew. My question is whether these steps could not have been made prior to the terror attacks. Why did we have to wait for the attacks to happen?

[Peres] How could I have known four weeks ago that this would happen? That they would get a university punk to recruit suicide bombers?

[Mish'al] Did you not know of the Hamas infrastructure in the Strip?

[Peres] I do not know what an infrastructure is, and I do not know what your question is all about. There is a Hamas infrastructure that was inactive for seven months, and there was therefore no need to deal with it. The terrorist himself said that as the elections were approaching, they decided to do whatever it was they did. Also, I heard Yahya 'Ayyash had been killed, which means that someone must have been taking care of things.

[Ya'ari] You must have heard about it after the fact, naturally.

[Peres] Would you like to interrogate me?

[Ya'ari] I was merely asking.

[Peres] I definitely heard about it after the fact.

[Mish'al] Sir, I would like to clarify....

[Peres, interrupting] Listen, if you would like to receive an answer different from the one I gave you....

[Mish'al, interrupting] No, no, I merely wanted to ask whether you had no knowledge of the Hamas activities in the Strip, of the existence of potential suicide bombers, of the same fugitives whose names appeared on the list you gave 'Arafat.

[Peres] We did submit the list before the events, and various activities had been undertaken before that. When the situation deteriorated, we resorted to more drastic measures. Look, that is how things are done, and they certainly are in a democratic country: As long as there is no emergency, no emergency steps are undertaken. There are things you cannot do when the situation is normal. For instance, when the situation is normal, you cannot announce a general closure all of a sudden, causing people to starve. Only when very drastic things happen can you resort to very drastic measures.

[Ya'ari] During that lull, the Israeli Government was instrumental in permitting the Hamas people to leave the country to attend various negotiations with Palestinian Authority [PA] officials — 'Arafat's representatives — in Cairo, which dealt with a kind of cease-fire. Was it a discreet gamble on our part on the possibility that they would conclude the matter without our intervention?

[Peres] Look, Hamas has a political branch and a military branch. 'Arafat wanted to reach an agreement on disarmament with the political branch. It was his business, not ours, and we did not prevent him from taking a stab at it. Had we prevented him, he could claim that he could have disarmed Hamas through negotiations, but that we did not allow it. So we did allow him to negotiate.

[Mish'al] Have you approved the deportation of Hamas activists as part of the steps against terror?

[Peres] Yes, I am for it, but not deportations of women, children, old people, or innocent people. I will not hesitate to do it within legal boundaries and only if I have absolute proof that the deportation will aid security.

[Mish'al] Then deportations are in fact the next move.

[Peres] Look, Nisim, if you insist on questions like this, I will have to protest.

There is no next move; they are all a series of moves, rather than consecutive steps. These are numerous steps undertaken simultaneously. When you start fighting such a network, you ask yourself questions such as where their financing comes from. We wanted to quash their financing sources. To stop their financing from arriving, we are currently undertaking a truly international initiative. We wanted to know what seminar these gentlemen come from, and then we closed down two seminars. We wanted to improve security, and we proceeded to add about 1,000 soldiers to Jerusalem and hundreds to other locations. We are creating the Divide Line, we are obtaining sensing equipment. All these are a series of steps designed to seal every possible crack.

[Ya'ari] Mr. Prime Minister, you have just mentioned the international aspect. The Jordanian Government and the PA are meeting this evening, and King Husayn will meet President Clinton tonight, in view of the PA's accusation that Jordan is the source of the funds flowing to Hamas' military wing. The Jordanians deny this and have taken measures accordingly. Have you discussed the issue with King Husayn in recent days?

[Peres] I spoke with King Husayn. I did not know about the financial aspect then, and I do not know about it now. I know nothing about 'Arafat's argument.

We discussed other issues, and I found the king really willing — and I believe him — to cooperate in order to prevent any Jordanian contribution to Hamas.

[Ya'ari] Would you expect other Jordanian measures in addition to those taken so far?

[Peres] I must say that whatever we asked for they agreed to do.

[Mish'al] President 'Ezer Weizman proposed to you or to the government to put off the pullout from Hebron. Is that a good proposal?

[Peres] I said that we will not pull out of Hebron before the Palestinian Charter is amended. That is my answer.

[Ya'ari] The Palestinian Council convenes tomorrow in Gaza. In other words, the two-month clock begins ticking and the amendment of the charter must take place by 7 May.

[Peres] At the latest. The amendment must take place within two months, not after two months.

[Ya'ari] Or else?

[Peres] Or else nothing. Are you asking me what will happen if this does not take place within two months? Then they will not be honoring the agreement, with all that this implies.

[Ya'ari] What happens then?

[Peres] I said: Then the train will come to a stop.

[Ya'ari] In other words, there is a linkage between the two.

[Peres] There is no linkage. When there is a contract, both sides are expected to fulfill it. If one side fails to do so the contract is violated.

[Mish'al] You mean the political process, the train of the political process, will stop. Sir, I would like to move on to the Oslo agreement. Are we approaching the moment when you, the architect of the Oslo agreement, will say: I was wrong, I made a mistake?

[Peres] No, there is no chance of that. I want to speak clearly and unequivocally at these painful moments. As a man who wants peace I feel it is my duty to take all security measures without hesitation. My real feeling, however, is that we are now in the last quarter of the conflict between us and the Palestinians. Unfortunately, in this last quarter we have come across many land mines and suffered many casualties, but this is the last quarter. When it is over, a new quarter will begin, the quarter of the clash with the fundamentalists. The difference is that these threaten the Arabs no less than they threaten us, and it is over this issue that a united front could emerge. I have not changed my mind. In my opinion, even if the Oslo agreement did not exist — actually this is a fact — there still was the intifadah, the Lebanon war, and the stabbings. There are Arabs who still want to murder peace. The difference is that the largest terrorist organization, the PLO, renounced the weapon of terror and is instead shooting at terrorists and arresting them; perhaps less than we would like, but in a total reversal with the past.

[Mish'al] What difference does it make if the killing is done by Hamas rather than by the PLO?

[Peres] The suicide operators are the difference between Hamas and the PLO. Our real problem is the suicide operators who inflict numerous casualties. Were it not for the suicide operators.... [changes thought] The number of attacks has not been so big, but the number of casualties has been very high.

[Ya'ari] Sir, with the suicide weapon they have managed to change the original Oslo formula you envisioned. Instead of a framework of more cooperation and mutual openness, we are talking — you are, too, sir — about more separation and distance.

[Peres] We are halfway there. I do not think all the lessons can be drawn at this point. I do not want to delude myself, but the suicides also did something to the Arab world, its leaders, clerics, and ordinary men. I do not recall such a broad expression of sorrow or denunciation — call it what you will — on the part of the Arab world. Perhaps it also awakened something in them, because they stand more to lose than we do. To be honest and fair, no Arab country has given the Palestinians what we gave them, and they realize it. After all, the West Bank was under Arab rule for 26 years, and the Gaza Strip was under Arab rule for many years. We acted according to moral criteria. If anything is murdered, it will first and foremost be Palestinian hope. At the same time, seeing that this is a new experience, lessons must be drawn constantly. The current map is a very complex one, with settlements in all sorts of places, and we definitely must adapt ourselves to the new reality.

[Mish'al] You will agree with me, Mr. Peres, that despite what you are saying and judging by reality, the conclusion is that making peace does not necessarily lead to a halt to terror.

[Peres] Making peace sometimes has to go through a mine field and terror. One must look at the goal, however, and the alternative. What is the alternative, tell me? Say there was no peace; would there not have been an intifadah, murder, or stabbings?

[Mish'al] The difference is that these continue despite the fact that there is a peace agreement.

[Peres] There is a peace agreement and these continue. And the peace agreement includes more partners on the Arab side than before. Not enough, and not all of them.

[Ya'ari] One of the most jarring notes has been Syria's thundering silence. Nobody will argue with you that there has never been such a condemnation of any act of terror. Therefore, Syria's silence and its stubborn refusal to denounce it, even when Clinton sends him a message and the U.S. ambassador looks after the Syrian foreign minister all over the place, is really thundering. Isn't this an ill omen about their intentions?

[Peres] When we entered the negotiations we knew that Syria was a reclusive state with very unorthodox customs. This is one of the reasons we have now stopped the negotiations. There was no denunciation, and there is the totally unacceptable fact that in Damascus there are people who incite the Palestinians to pursue acts of terror.

[Ya'ari] Are the denunciation of Hamas and the ouster of its headquarters from Damascus a condition for the resumption of the negotiations now?

[Peres] I prefer to use my own language rather than ultimatums and conditions. I speak very clearly, and those who understand will understand. We recalled our delegation and called off the negotiations.

[Mish'al] Sir, you object to putting off the elections. Does this mean that you also object to the establishment of a national unity government or to the inclusion of Likud figures in a security cabinet?

[Peres] I do not object to forming a national unity framework. What I am disinclined to do now is to enter coalition negotiations over portfolios and party compositions. It seems to me a waste of time and irresponsibility on my part. Also, I do not want to go the Knesset now and get caught up in discussions about elections. I think that we must now lead the people through a very rough time with maximum unity and restraint and with minimum exaggeration. A rough time, but I believe we will come out of it stronger. As I said before, I do not want to paralyze the economy or society, let fear run amok, or allow Hamas to win.

At the same time, I would like to tell you something from the bottom of my heart. I returned to the Defense Ministry after a very long hiatus. One of the most pleasant surprises I found was a team of outstanding commanders — I say this with full responsibility: the chief of staff; the General Staff; the Shin Bet, both under its current and previous chiefs; all of them very serious people who work day and night. I can also say with a clear conscience: I have not rejected even one operational proposal; freedom of action has not been curbed in the least, with me bearing responsibility, as is my obligation, mainly to the mishaps — and I am not avoiding this either. We have only one army, however, and it is not owned by either my party or any other party. We have only one Shin Bet, and it is not owned by either my party or any other party. No other nation has such an army, Shin Bet, or Mosad. They are considered some of the best in the world. Today I attended an officers' graduating ceremony....

[Mish'al, interrupting] Excuse me for interrupting you, but I would like to go back to the question about the unity government. Can we infer from what you said, if I understood you correctly, that you may invite Likud figures to join a security cabinet?

[Peres] If the circumstances emerge. I do not want to court anybody. I feel neither miserable nor lonely. I very much want the people to be united. I respect the opposition and I do not want to accuse it of anything. I am aware of the big responsibility entrusted to me.

I would like to go back to what I was saying before. I visited a military training base today and I heard two stories. An officer told me the following story: Our radio operator, a wonderful guy, was killed in Lebanon yesterday. Immediately five of his friends volunteered to replace him. The base commander then told me another story. A young officer came to him and told him: Sir, what will be? The commander gave him a very nice reply: The difference between what you were before and what you are now is that what will be has ceased being a question and is now an answer. You are the answer.

We have extraordinary soldiers. I do not want to drive them crazy, I do not want to stage spectacular or irresponsible operations. At the same time, I will not hesitate to carry out any correct, right idea put on the table: An idea spelled in operational rather than general terms or demagoguery.

[Ya'ari] Sir, what is your reaction to the whispers in recent days about the possible change in the distribution of portfolios, including the transfer of the defense portfolio to another person?

[Peres] You know, as one grows old one learns from the prophet Moses to become hard of hearing.

[Mish'al] And from Ben-Gurion you learned not to renounce the defense portfolio.

[Peres] Ben-Gurion was the defense minister during a war, and he once told me: With me, the prime minister waits in line for the defense minister. There are days when a prime minister really becomes subordinate to the defense minister, and that is also the way I feel today. I think this also entails the advantage that I can activate the entire government and all the cabinet ministers in concert with the security forces in which I have full confidence. Whispers and gossip are part of the....

[Mish'al, interrupting] Did you hear about it?

[Peres] I read it in the papers. I did not hear it. First of all, I do not consider it important or believe it so much. I do not want to waste my time. Look, I do not have much time, my diary is crowded. I have no time for whispers, rumors, or gossip. It simply does not interest me. I do not even read Tzipora [famous gossip columnist].

[Mish'al] There we have another scoop. Mr. Prime Minister, thank you very much for granting us an interview.

Israel: Jerusalem, Ashqelon Hamas Bombers Arrested by Shin Bet

TA0603140596 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Two important developments in the investigation of the latest bombings: The Shin Bet and Israel Police have arrested an Israeli Arab from a village in northern Israel on suspicion that he smuggled in the suicide terrorist from the Gaza Strip to Tel Aviv's Dizengoff Street. It has also been officially announced that the Shin Bet has uncovered the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] gang responsible for the two bus bombings in Jerusalem and the attack near Ashqelon.

Here are the details released on the two disclosures: The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and Israel Police spokesmen have issued an official communique about the uncovering of the Hamas gang responsible for the two bus bombings in Jerusalem and the attack in Ashqelon. Our correspondent Karmela Menashe reports that the Shin Bet investigation revealed that the gang members operated out of the Teachers Seminar in Ramallah, an area under Palestinian Authority [PA] control. A resident of the al-Fawwar refugee camp and a resident of Rafah, both of them students in the seminar, were arrested in coordination with the PA. The members of the gang were recruited last month in Ramallah by a Hamas fugitive from the Gaza Strip, who tasked them with recruiting youngsters identifying with Hamas and willing to commit suicide. Gang member Muhammad Abu-Wardah recruited three youngsters — two from the al-Fawwar refugee camp and the third from the village of Burqa' — and arranged a meeting between them and the wanted Hamas man in Ramallah. The first two perpetrated the bombings in Jerusalem and near Ashqelon 10 days ago, and the third, a student in the Ramallah seminar, staged the bus bombing in Jerusalem earlier this week.

It was announced at noon today that a Palestinian court sentenced Abu-Wardah, who recruited the suicide bombers, to life imprisonment and hard labor. He was caught a few days ago in Ramallah. Yasir 'Arafat endorsed the sentence.

[Jerusalem JMCC Press Service in English at 1355 GMT adds: "Commenting on the court's decision, leading Islamic figure in Jericho Shaykh Harb Jabir said he 'was astonished by the court's hurried decision, which did not give Abu-Wardah the chance to defend himself or engage an attorney for his defence. We were also surprised that he was sentenced so harshly, after barely being in custody for 48 hours. We call upon the PA to work with the people with an open mind, so that we may foil Israel's designs to create a rift between our people.'"]

About an hour ago it was announced that the Shin Bet and Israel Police arrested an Israeli Arab from a village in northern Israel on suspicion of having smuggled in the suicide terrorist from the Gaza Strip to Tel Aviv's Dizengoff Street. In his interrogation, the Israeli Arab admitted to having smuggled in the terrorist in his truck and to receiving over $1,000 in return. According to him, he did not know that the man was a terrorist who was planning to stage an attack in Israel.

Our correspondents report that the suspect was arrested two days ago, a few hours after the lethal attack. To repeat, the man is an Israeli Arab from northern Israel. He is a truck driver who transports goods to and from the Gaza Strip through the Qarni crossing.

It transpired in the investigation that an Islamic Jihad activist in the Gaza Strip had coordinated the smuggling of the suicide bomber with him. The day of the bombing he smuggled the terrorist, hidden in a crate under the truck's rear seat, into Israel through the Qarni crossing. Then he drove the terrorist to the site of the bombing. The terrorist activated the bomb he was carrying on his back shortly after getting off the truck. Our correspondent Ilan Ro'e reports that Justice Ron Shapira remanded the suspect in custody for another two weeks.

Our correspondent Shulamit Schmerling is in the village where the truck driver lives, and she reports that local villagers are astonished and cannot believe that he committed this deed. Many youngsters in the village serve in the IDF, but the suspect did not serve in the army. He is married and has children. Police troops have arrived in the village. The head of the Committee of Arab Local Councils has strongly denounced the suspect.

Israel: Driver Identifies Tel Aviv Bomber; Troops Explain Lax Check

TA0703064996 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Arab Israeli arrested on suspicion of bringing the terrorist who committed the Tel Aviv suicide bombing from Gaza to Israel has identified the bomber by photographs.

The Qol Yisra'el reporter says reserve soldiers were supposed to check trucks coming to Israel from Gaza's Qarni crosspoint. In addition, the trucks' goods were to be checked with special equipment. Reserve soldiers said that despite this, after having checked dozens of trucks starting at 0600 in the morning, alertness levels drop, and known Israeli drivers passed through with only a token inspection.

Israel: 'Sources' Note PSS Contribution to 'Terrorist' Squad Arrest

TA0603185296 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1730 GMT 6 Mar 96

[Political correspondent 'Imanu'el Rosen's report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Several sources stated today that the cooperation between the Palestinian Security Service [PSS] in the West Bank, headed by Jibril al-Rujub, and the Israeli Shin Bet has greatly improved since the last string of terrorist attacks began. Without divulging details, the officials noted that this cooperation was definitely one of the main factors that contributed to the exposure of the two terrorist squads — one responsible for the Jerusalem and Ashqelon bombings and the other for the Dizengoff Center attack — and to the speed with which the squads were uncovered within a few days.

Israel: Addition of Troops Deployed to Dividing Line Reported

TA0703070096 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0600 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] has deployed 10 additional companies to the dividing line between Gilbo'a District and southern Har Hevron. The line is also being monitored by IDF and Israel Police helicopters. This has been reported by our army affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe.

IDF bulldozers have started building high piles of dirt in the Tulkarm area on the dividing line in order to deter potential infiltrators from entering Israel.

Israel: Security Sources See Ramallah as Hamas Terror Center

TA0703065196 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli and Palestinian security sources say Ramallah has turned into a center for Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] terror.

The Palestinian security forces in Ramallah are conducting a manhunt for a Khan Yunus resident who is suspected of being the planner of the Jerusalem and Ashqelon suicide bombings and the founder of the terrorist squad that perpetrated these attacks.

Israel: Closure Between West Bank Towns Lifted for 12 Hours

TA0703072296 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] There will be no closure between West Bank villages from 0700 [0500 GMT] this morning until 1900 tonight, and local residents will be allowed to move inside the area. This was announced by Major General Gabi Ofir, the Judaea and Samaria Brigade commander.

He further announced that IDF [Israel Defense Forces] troops make arrests of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] activists every night, and that the manhunt for fugitives is continuing.

Last night the Israel Police detained over 800 Palestinians who had infiltrated into Israel despite the closure. Some 160 Israelis received citations for illegally employing workers from the territories, and 150 citations were handed out to Israelis who permitted Palestinian workers to stay in Israel overnight. Charges were filed against them. Sixty residents of the territories were tried in the Tiberias Peace Magistrate's Court yesterday; 44 were sent to jail for periods ranging from one to six months, and the rest were fined or received suspended sentences.

Israel: U.S. Counterterror Agents Coordinating Anti-Hamas Efforts

TA0703110296 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 7 Mar 96 p 21

[Report by correspondent in Washington Hayim Shibi]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Washington is striving to create a joint American-Israeli-Jordanian-Palestinian intelligence alignment to curb Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] terrorism and create an international and Middle East climate that will allow 'Arafat to deal firmly with Hamas.

The first team of Federal agents specializing in counterterrorism is already operating in Israel. Additional CIA agents will join the effort to create this coordinated regional alignment. [passage omitted]

Israel: Arab Deputy Mayor Detained for Transferring Funds to Hamas

TA0703123496 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. Sulayman Ahmad Aghbariyah, the deputy mayor of Umm-al-Fahm, has been detained on suspicion that he transferred 10 million shekels from abroad to relatives of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] suicide bombers and to Hamas activists. The police asked the Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court to extend his remand by eight more days.

Our legal affairs correspondent 'Anat Peleg reports that Dr. Aghbariyah is also chairman of the Islamic Salvation Committee, a charity organization.

Israel: Dayan Protests U.S. Directive Against Using Buses in Israel

TA0703103396 Tel Aviv DAVAR RISHON in Hebrew 7 Mar 96 p 11

[Report by Arye Dayan]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Yesterday Deputy Foreign Minister Eli Dayan passed Israel's official protest to the United States against a U.S. State Department directive telling U.S. citizens to avoid using public transportation in Israel.

Dayan noted there is an internal contradiction in the U.S. policy concerning terrorism in Israel. "On the one hand, the United States is sending Israel advanced bomb-detecting equipment, while on the other it asks its citizens not to use buses in Israel. The supply of this equipment is helping us fight terrorism, but the directive to its citizens causes panic, and this is precisely what the terrorists are trying to achieve," he said. [passage omitted]

Israel: Knesset Endorses First Reading of Orient House Closure Bill

TA0703113596 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The first reading of the bill on the closure of Orient House was endorsed by the Knesset plenum, with 49 Knesset members [MK's] — all from the opposition — supporting the bill submitted by Likud MK Yehoshu'a Matza and 36 coalition members voting against.

Our correspondent Hayim Hecht notes that all the attempts made by coalition chairman Ra'anan Kohen to ensure the presence of voters in the plenum failed since MK's and ministers are preoccupied with the upcoming primaries. Eight ministers were present at the cabinet table during the vote.

Israel: Likud—Peres Conspired To Blame Likud for Bombings

TA0703115896 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 7 Mar 96 pp 1, 2

[Report by Sarah Honig]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Likud last night charged that Prime Minister Shim'on Peres had conspired to blame it for the spate of terrorist bombings in an "unprecedented dirty trick."

The Likud reacted furiously to an interview on Channel 1 with Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] terrorist Muhammad Abu-Wardah, sentenced in Jericho to life for allegedly helping set up the Jerusalem and Ashqelon blasts, who claimed that the recent atrocities were committed specifically to help the Likud defeat Labor, and thereby stymie the peace process.

Following the interview with Abu-Wardah, Peres said on Channel 1 that he had known this for a long time, but did not want to say so in order not to "fan the flames."

In an official communique, the Likud charged that what "was revealed here was vile collusion between Peres and 'Arafat in an attempt to influence the election results in Israel. It is a shame and a scandal that an Israeli prime minister should conspire with 'Arafat in an abject provocation, in which 'Arafat dictates a phony confession to a prisoner in a PLO jail aimed at slandering the Likud and the entire opposition.

"The prime minister engages in such dirty tricks instead of admitting the failure of his policies, which resulted in such disasters. Instead of admitting he erred and misled this nation, Peres seeks via his partner 'Arafat, to incite against the Likud and to place the blame for what happened on the Likud."

The statement asserts that "Hamas does not want to wreck the so-called peace process, but to destroy the State of Israel. Hamas and the enemies of Israel know full well that, unlike the Peres regime, a Likud government would pursue them everywhere and all the time."

MK [Knesset member] Ze'ev Begin termed the interview the "vilest and most odious of all the odious maneuvers of which Peres is so capable. The PLO, which wants to help Peres out, had Jibril al-Rujub beat this guy up, and, fresh out of al-Rujub's torture dungeons, still visibly shaken, he says that Hamas' motive was to put the Likud in power. Peres is seen nodding, and then he begins a pathetic 20-minute appearance on TV saying that yes, he had known this for a long time, but didn't want to say so in order not to 'fan the flames'.

"What base hypocrisy. He says he didn't want to fan the flames but, of course, he does precisely that. A more vile performance on Peres's part cannot be imagined... We will make Peres pay for this at the polls. We will show how his Oslo deals are deals with which we most literally cannot live."

Labor party secretary-general Nisim Zvili last night called the Likud reaction "ludicrous. This is obviously one more indication that the Likud's campaign strategy is in shambles, that the party is in a loss to explain itself, and is reaching out for the most ridiculous charges possible."

[Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew on 7 March includes a page 6 report by Nadav Ha'etzni adding: "Sources in the Palestinian Preventive Security Service [PPSS] yesterday claimed that the remarks made by Abu-Wardah on his TV 1 interview, to the effect that the attacks were meant to help the Likud, were put in his mouth by Jibril al-Rujub, head of the PPSS.

["In his initial interrogation Abu-Wardah said he recruited suicide terrorists to carry out the Jerusalem and Ashqelon attacks 'to avenge Yahya 'Ayyash's assassination.' He said nothing about efforts to help any political party in Israel. Similarly, in his interview to Voice of Palestine, Abu-Wardah failed to mention the objective of helping the Likud."]

Israel: New Party Suggests Shooting Fatah, Hamas Leaders 'on Sight'

TA0703120796 Tel Aviv VESTI (VESTI-2 supplement) in Russian 7 Mar 96 p 2

[FBIS Summary] A paid announcement by the Yemin Yisra'el party [recently established by Knesset Member Ya'aqov Gutman, a Moledet breakaway], states: "Yemin Yisra'el calls on the Jewish nation to wake up and firmly repudiate the illusions being woven by the liars that are turning our national home into a mass grave.

"We have repeatedly demanded the implementation of our counterterror program as follows:

"1. A curfew should be introduced at once on all Arab points of settlement on the West Bank, using elite army and police units for enforcement.

"2. IDF [Israel Defense Forces] troops should be brought into all Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza cities in a bid to methodically destroy all terror bases: their structure, munitions, and weapons, activists, terrorists, and their accomplices.

"3. To shoot on sight every enemy of Israel, beginning with the leaders of Fatah and Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement].

"Today, when these measures are no longer sufficient, the current government has finally decided to endorse some of them. Yet if we are to avoid the need to perpetually shoot our proliferating enemies and their leaders, we must achieve full separation between the two nations who claim this land. There is no room for two nations on this land.

"Let Arabs move to the east bank of the Jordan River, and Jews — to the West Bank.

"Let the State of Israel be for the people of Israel.

"Let there be peace in Israel."

Israel: New Policy Allows Razing of Suspects' Homes in Jerusalem

TA0603163396 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] At noon today, the security forces sealed the Islamic college of sciences in Abu-Dis in East Jerusalem. An IDF [Israel Defense Forces] officer said that a great deal of seditious material had been found in searches conducted on the site.

The army legal adviser for the Judaea and Samaria district said that the policy pertaining to the demolition of houses of suicide terrorists and their handlers in the Jerusalem area has been changed. Our correspondent Mira Amsalem reports that to date the security authorities had only sealed the homes of terrorists in the Jerusalem area and did not demolish them. Following the change in this policy, the commander of the Home Front Command issued an order to raze the home of terrorist Muhyi-al-Din Sharif, alias the Engineer No. 2, in Bayt Hanina in north Jerusalem.

Israel: Israel, Jordan Cooperating in Struggle Against Hamas

TA0703122696 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 7 Mar 96 pp A1, A14

[Report by Eytan Rabin]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] The Israeli and Jordanian defense establishments have started cooperating this week in a bid to prevent the transfer of funds from Jordan to Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] in the territories. A senior security source divulged that over the last few months large amounts of money have been transferred through various channels to Hamas activists in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, adding that a considerable percentage of the funds arrived from Jordan.

When this was discovered, it was decided to intensify the security cooperation with Jordan. Palestinian Authority President Yasir 'Arafat has also ordered his security personnel to prevent the transfer of funds to Hamas.

The Supreme Counterterror Command headed by Shin Bet chief 'Ami Ayalon yesterday held a meeting in Jerusalem. It was decided to work out operational methods in the struggle against Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, and to appoint professional and operational subcommittees to deal with each organization separately.

Israel: Government To Allocate 20 Million for Green Line Security

TA0703122096 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 7 Mar 96 p 2

[Report by Raine Marcus]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] More than NIS [new Israeli shekels] 20 million will be allocated for security along the Green Line this year, Internal Security Minister Moshe Shahal said yesterday at a conference with 87 local council heads.

"This budget has already been authorized by the Treasury," he said.

Each town and settlement along the Green Line will receive more security officers, vehicles, and other measures. The money will also be used to build fences containing sophisticated hi-tech systems, such as closed circuit TV cameras, telescopic night sights, and sensors. Police helicopters will also be used extensively, said Shahal.

"We cannot build an impregnable wall which no one can penetrate," he said. "But the measures we will take will decrease considerably the possibility of terrorists entering Israel. We will at least know that anyone not authorized to be here has not entered through legitimate crossings, and has either entered for criminal or terrorist motives. Otherwise he would have no reason to be here."

He stressed that although fences and other measures along the Green Line would not bring 100 percent success, "around 90% can be achieved. But there is no total solution for the suicide bomber," he said.

Settlements along the Green Line will get 87 more security officers and 42 more security vehicles. Shahal praised the 3,400 volunteers operating in the area.

The border with the Gaza Strip must also be strengthened, stressed Shahal, since there are many openings in the fences, which are also easy to climb.

Justice Minister David Liba'i is expected to sign a document today enabling expedited trial proceedings for Arabs working here illegally and their Israeli employers. Shahal is campaigning for a mandatory two-year prison term for such employers.

"It is possible to block all entrance of illegal vehicles and pedestrians," Inspector-General Asaf Hefetz told the meeting. "At the moment there are loopholes along the seam lines and other borders. We must close off these areas completely.

"The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] will guard certain borders, while more innovative missions suit the Border Police," he said, noting that an additional 12 Border Police units are needed.

He stressed the need for more intelligence systems, since "there will always be tension between the two populations."

Border Police chief Commander Yisra'el Sadan told of plans to reinforce his forces, both along the Green Line and in Jerusalem.

Israel: Gaza Commander Criticizes Palestinian Police for Inaction

TA0703122296 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 7 Mar 96 p 4A

[Report by Aluf Ben and ITIM]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] Brigadier General Yitzhaq Eytan, commander of the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] Gaza Division, yesterday said he is not satisfied with the Palestinian performance against terrorism. "So far the Palestinian Police have not arrested the heads of the terror organizations in Gaza. The wanted Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] leaders are walking around freely. The Palestinian Authority has detained only the small fries," he said. Eytan added the IDF knows that the terrorist leaders are walking around freely in the Gaza Strip and that the Palestinian Police are detaining people who are not linked to the Hamas military arm and the attacks. [passage omitted]

Brig. Gen. Eytan added that "the Palestinian economy depends on the links with Israel, and when there is a complete closure we do not let in basic products and foodstuffs. In the long run we cannot continue the closure. I assume that at some stage we will allow basic foodstuffs into the Gaza Strip."

Regarding the passage of people through the tunnels dug under the dividing line, Eytan said that for the last year or so no terror organization has managed to use tunnels, adding that no tunnels have been discovered. He praised the Egyptians at the Rafah crossing point, saying that their patrols are preventing the smuggling of weapons and the passage of infiltrators.

Israel: Likud, Gesher Merger Agreed; Levi To Be No. 2 in Likud Cabinet

TA0703071696 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0600 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Likud and Gesher negotiating teams agreed early this morning on a draft agreement between the two parties, and if it is endorsed by Netanyahu, it will be brought up for Likud Central Committee approval by the end of next week.

Our correspondent Yaron Deqel reports that the number of cabinet portfolios Gesher will receive if the Likud establishes the next government will be proportional to the number of portfolios to be allotted to the Likud. David Levi will have to give his consent to the portfolio the Likud will wish to assign to him, but he will be unable to choose any portfolio he wishes. It was further agreed that David Levi will be No. 2 in the Likud government.

Our correspondent notes that Refa'el Eytan has also demanded that he be second after Netanyahu.

Jordan: Iraqi Warplane Equipment Seized at Amman Airport

JN0703123496 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] An official government spokesman announced that the concerned Jordanian authorities seized a banned shipment imported for Iraq from Poland via Queen Alia International Airport. He added that the shipment, imported for the al-Iman Establishment under the name of agricultural equipment, contained equipment and spare parts for warplanes. He said the shipment was confiscated because it is not listed among the materials allowed by the UN Security Council to be imported by Iraq.

The official spokesman expressed resentment and sorrow for the attempt to exploit Jordan, which is implementing the UN Security Council resolutions faithfully and fully and which is exerting all possible efforts to help the brother Iraqi people overcome the repercussions of the embargo in the area of food, medicine, and essential civilian needs.

Jordan: Government Decides To Ban Hamas Media Activity

TA0703142396 Gaza AL-HAYAH AL-JADIDAH in Arabic 6 Mar 96 pp 1, 15

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Amman, AL-HAYAH AL-JADIDAH — Jordan has decided to ban the media activity of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], which uses Amman as a center for its media and political activity. AL-HAYAH AL-JADIDAH has learned that the Jordanian Government will shortly adopt operational measures to stop this media and propaganda activity by Hamas in Amman, from where statements are faxed all over the world. Moreover, statements by leading Hamas figures residing in Jordan are issued in Amman as well.

This Jordanian decision comes in the wake of the recent suicide operations carried out by Hamas members in Jerusalem, Ashqelon, and Tel Aviv. Whereas some people are hinting that the Jordanian decision is a victory for the Palestinian leadership in the National Authority [NA], senior officials in the Jordanian Government affirm that this Jordanian approach is not related to its stance toward the NA because Jordan, for many years, has been clear in its recognition of the Palestinian leadership as the sole representative of the Palestinian people.

A responsible Jordanian official disclosed that Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti has decided to stop Hamas' media activity in the Jordanian arena despite the potentially vehement reaction of the Jordanian Islamic movement, which is the largest opposition bloc in Jordan and has 16 deputies in parliament.

This Jordanian measure comes at a time when the government is trying to break up some other fundamentalist organizations and arrest their members. This escalation with the Muslim Brotherhood will place a new burden on the government, which is shouldering many burdens. According to observers, however, al-Kabariti is betting that the brotherhood will remain silent with regard to the halting of Hamas media activities.

It seems that Hamas was quick to realize the seriousness of the Jordanian approach and does not wish to escalate the confrontation with the Jordanian Government. Muhammad Nazzal, the movement's representative in Jordan, left Amman for Damascus, and Hamas spokesman Ibrahim Ghawshah has secluded himself at home, has severed his contacts with the news media, and is refusing to answer phone calls.

Hamas leaders in Jordan stress that the movement's central leadership is inside the Palestine territories and that the role of Nazzal and Ghawshah is limited to disseminating the movement's voice to the Arab and Islamic masses. [passage omitted]

Jordan: PNA's Nabil Sha'th Says Statements 'Distorted'

JN0603174596 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Acting Prime Minister Dr. 'Abdallah al-Nusur today received a telephone call from Dr. Nabil Sha'th, Palestinian official in charge of planning and international cooperation. Dr. Sha'th said that statements attributed to him on the Hamas leadership's presence in Jordan were distorted. He said that Jordan was never the subject of accusations or suspicion with regard to terrorism, violence, or sabotage, especially in view of Jordan's long political history characterized by moderation and reality, and its continuous condemnation of and stand against all forms of terrorism.

Dr. Sha'th said that Jordan, whose peace treaty with Israel passed through all the democratic and constitutional stages, is one of the countries most concerned about peace and most committed to peace charters, pledges, and agreements. He asserted that His Majesty King Husayn and Jordan have supported—without any limits and with absolute truth and good will—the Palestinian cause and the Palestinian National Authority [PNA] in order to realize independence, freedom, and withdrawal [of Israeli forces]. He said that this enjoys the full respect of PNA President Yasir 'Arafat and all the Palestinian people.

Dr. al-Nusur said that Jordan, which paid a dear price for terrorism, has faced more than any other country all forms of terrorism irrespective of their source and target. He said that Jordan denounces all forms of terrorism and condemns every unfair and suspect attempt to involve it in any criminal activity.

Jordan: Ministers Give 'Arafat 'Assurances' Over Alleged Hamas Aid

MM0603153296 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 6 Mar 96 p 3

[Report by Salih Qallab in Amman: "Two Jordanian Ministers Convey to 'Arafat al-Kabariti's Assurances That Amman Does Not Lend Any Support to Hamas or Its Leaders"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The successive suicide operations carried out by Hamas in Jerusalem, Ashqelon, and Tel Aviv have cast their gloomy shadow on the relations between Jordan and the Palestinian National Authority [PNA]. These relations have been fluctuating over the last two years and, after the recent Palestinian elections, have veered toward the possibility of coordination and the dismissal of mutual suspicions. In this context, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has learned that the Jordanian delegation which visited Gaza the day before yesterday included Interior Minister 'Awad Khulayfat and Water and Irrigation Minister Samir Qa'war, and carried a message to Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat from Jordanian Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti with reassurances that Jordan does not lend any help or support to Hamas or to its leaders in the Jordanian capital. According to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT's information, the message carried to Gaza by the two Jordanian ministers is a response to a complaint made by 'Arafat to the Jordanian Monarch King Husayn during their telephone conversation following the recent operations, to the effect that Hamas leaders living in Jordan had supervised the implementation of these operations. There is some unsubstantiated information indicating that the Jordanian message carried to Gaza by the two Jordanian ministers came as a response to an official message from 'Arafat to the Jordanian Prime Minister which contained information about a message allegedly sent by a senior Hamas official to the 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam Battalions in Gaza and the West Bank and intercepted by the Palestinian security organs, mentioning Jordanian facilities and assistance offered to the Islamic movement in connection with the suicide operations.

The Jordanian authorities consider this "alleged" message as purely a ploy aimed at driving a wedge between Jordan and the PNA, sowing distrust between the two sides, and blocking the rapprochement which has progressed since the recent Palestinian elections. According to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT's sources, the message from Jordanian Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti to 'Arafat included the following three points:

First: A categorical Jordanian denial of the rumors that Jordan has lent or will lend any facilities of any kind to Hamas, whether in connection with suicide operations or in any other field, and stating that the movement's leaders in Jordan are resident there as Jordanian citizens, with all their activities under very close scrutiny.

Second: The hope that the PNA does not rely on rumors to define its positions, especially with regard to such crucial and sensitive issues, and the request that it provide any reliable information on any kind of assistance allegedly given by Jordan to Hamas in any field.

Third: The Jordanian Government's readiness to achieve the highest level of security cooperation with the PNA, and the assertion that Jordan is as keen on Palestinian national security as on Jordanian national security, and that it views the PNA's political options as Jordanian political options within the framework of the settlement and peace process with Israel.

According to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT's sources, the Jordanian delegation to Gaza told President 'Arafat that Jordan is ready to welcome a Palestinian security delegation any time that the PNA wants coordination between the two sides in all fields. It should be mentioned here that that Palestinian Intelligence Chief Brigadier General Amin al-Hindi made a flying visit to Jordan three days prior to the start of this series of suicide operations, and may have met with the new Director of Jordanian Intelligence, Major General Samih al-Butaykhi, during this visit which lasted only one night.

Jordan: Minister Denies Sheltering Groups Connected With Terrorism

JN0603125396 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1200 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The minister of interior said Jordan does not shelter any group connected with terrorism and any talk to the contrary is false and completely rejected by Jordan. Dr. 'Awad Khulayfat said if there is a group or organization of such a kind in Jordan, the government will apply the law in full in this case. He noted that Jordan exercises its sovereignty on its soil in accordance with the dictates of the interest of Jordan and those of the Arab countries.

The minister of interior renewed Jordan's condemnation of all acts of violence, terrorism, and extremism, and underscored that the country was totally unconnected with such acts. He added that Jordan in any case refuses to be blamed for such acts. Dr. Khulayfat asserted that those people who man the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] office here in Amman and act in the open without carrying arms or resorting to violence were Jordanian citizens in accordance with the country's laws in force.

[Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic at 1200 GMT on 6 March cites the interior minister as saying "there are no Hamas offices in Jordan, indicating that the persons who act publicly without carrying arms or resorting to violence are Jordanian citizens with whom we deal according to the Jordanian law."]

Jordan: Prince Hasan Says No Official Hamas Presence in Country

JN0603161296 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] His Highness Crown Prince Hasan, the regent, today expressed surprise and amazement at statements attributed to Palestinian Authority sources yesterday claiming that Hamas [the Islamic Resistance Movement] has a presence in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. His highness was responding to questions by a delegation representing the Canadian B'nai Brith Organization which called on his highness at the Royal Hashemite Court today. The Canadian and Israeli ambassadors in Amman were present at the meeting. His Highness said Jordan does not need to reassert its constant and firm position condemning terrorism irrespective of its form, identity, or motives.

His highness the regent said that Hamas does not have any organization in Jordan. He said that when an armed Hamas organization — the Jihad Work Committee — was discovered in Jordan in 1991 and was found to be in possession of arms and ammunition, its members were referred to court in accordance with Jordanian law, which applies to all, and which prosecutes whoever tries to violate it.

His highness said that the competent Jordanian authorities did not allow the Marj al-Zuhur Hamas and Islamic Jihad deportees to enter Jordan. He added that Hamas does not have any official office in Jordan. Its presence, he said, is confined to holders of Jordanian passports and their activities are confined to propaganda and political activities .

Jordan: Further on Prince Hasan Remarks About Terrorism

JN0603194096 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 6 Mar 96

[Announcer-read report over video]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] His Highness Crown Prince Hasan, the regent, today expressed surprise and amazement at statements attributed to Palestinian Authority [PA] sources yesterday claiming that Hamas [the Islamic Resistance Movement] has a presence in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. His highness was responding to questions by a delegation representing the Canadian B'nai Brith Organization which called on his highness at the Royal Hashemite Court today. The Canadian and Israeli ambassadors in Amman were present at the meeting. His Highness said Jordan does not need to reassert its constant and firm position condemning terrorism irrespective of its form, identity, or motives. [passage omitted]

His highness the regent reviewed the relationship between Hamas and others. Explaining Jordan's position, he said that some capitals are required to specify their stand on terrorism and all terrorist organizations. He said they should be requested to close this movement's offices and stop their support for it. On this occasion, he recalled his highness' support for Egyptian President Husni Mubarak's proposal for holding an international conference on combating terrorism.

Asked by a member of the delegation why Hamas had stopped its military activities throughout the duration of the Palestinian elections and whether it is linked to a secret agreement between the PA and the Hamas leaders, his highness said: I do not know. No information is available to us about this issue. All we know is that meetings took place in Cairo, Khartoum, and Gaza between the two leaderships. Apparently, the meetings were aimed to find common denominators.

Responding to a question on whether it is possible for the PA to benefit from the suicide operations in Jerusalem in particular and whether they can serve the PA's demands in its negotiations with Israel, his highness said: We are not in the picture of the situation. All that we have announced and are committed to is that the Palestinian situation is a domestic affair. We have recognized the PLO. Our policy is based on noninterference in others' affairs. In this regard, what we have suffered as a result of others' attempts to interfere in our affairs and the harm done to us as a result of that made noninterference in others' affairs a constant, firm philosophy decided by His Majesty

King Husayn and to which all the state's institutions are committed.

His Highness Crown Prince Hasan, the regent, stressed that the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan's policy of commitment to peace and longstanding condemnation of terrorism is not a casual technical matter. Rather, he said, it has been Jordan's constant policy to oppose all that would lead to attacks on innocent people under any excuse, justification, or pretext. As ever, he said, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is ready to contribute to any international effort that could lead to containing this phenomenon.

Jordan: House Speaker Stresses Country's Position Against Terrorism

JN0603202796 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 6 Mar 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Sa'd Hayil al-Surur, speaker of the House of Representatives, has said that Jordan, which suffered from and was the victim of terrorism for quite some time, was not and will never be a shelter or den for terrorism. He added that proceeding from its national, pan-Arab, and humanitarian principles and from its great and true mission, Jordan did not and will never spare any effort to stand against all forms of terrorism and extremism regardless of its source and motives.

In statements to the press, and commenting on the desperate hints and statements that sought to involve Jordan in the recent bombing incidents in Israel, the House of Representatives speaker said: This is really a surprise. He added: At a time when such acts were regarded as heroic, this persevering country, which struggled for the loftiest and most noble principles, suffered much from these acts and stood against them with all its power.

Al-Surur noted that the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is seeking by all means to entrench the values and pillars of a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace in the region after the Jordanian Parliament, the people's representative, had ratified the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty as a democratic expression of the people's desire for peace. Hence, it is absolutely illogical for it to contradict itself and its objectives, which it did not practice for mere showing off. Moreover, it is totally illogical that it should shelter any form of terrorism and extremism.

The House of Representatives speaker said that any country like Jordan, which respects itself, its pledges, and its principles cannot but stand against terrorism and extremism. He said that this is a country which is proud of its major contributions in resisting violence and entrenching the pillars of peace in many parts of the world.

He continued: Our sons in the Armed Forces and Public Security have made major, distinguished, and active contributions to peace keeping in many parts of the world. These contributions continue to enjoy the respect of all countries and peoples of the world and of all peace-loving forces in this world. He said: If some believe that accusing Jordan is the way to slip away from their responsibilities, then this is their affair, which we do not deny is something of which we disapprove and reject.

Al-Surur said: We in Jordan are proud of our consultative and democratic policy and the principles of our political pluralism, which are being practiced within the highest levels of democratic work free from extremism or from adopting any unilateral stand. If some who are outside the homeland could not absorb the Jordanian democratic process or understand it as it should be understood, then this too is their affair, and not ours. They might need some time to harmonize with the democratic state and accustom themselves to democratic practice. This is so they can distinguish between constitutional democratic opposition and terrorist acts and so they would be free of the entrenched convictions that makes them view opposition as a terrorist activity.

Al-Surur said: It is no secret to anyone that we in Jordan have a constitutional opposition, of which we are proud. It is an opposition that represents a healthy state, which we need and reinforce and which plays a basic and important role in national and comprehensive dialogue. He added: Everyone, including those who want to involve Jordan in the recent inhuman events, knows that this is the Jordanian opposition's policy, from which it does not deviate.

The House of Representatives speaker stressed that Jordan does not support collective punishment, killing, terrorism, and extremism. He noted that Jordan refuses to do so based on its ethics, principles, and inherited mission, which does not allow deviation from compassion, manliness, and loyalty to the ideal values in this world.

Al-Surur described Jordan's relationship with the peace process and its role in support of all efforts to achieve peace — so that it would be enjoyed by all parties in the region — as a principled and strategic stand. He said: From this premise, we supported our Palestinian twin brother at all levels and through all national institutions, especially the Jordanian Parliament, which adopted an irrevocable position. We, he added, do not view the Jordanian-Palestinian relationship as a temporary tactic practiced in a way that does not show full respect for everyone's feelings or in a way that does not serve their interests so that the view would vary from time to time according to circumstance and place. Indeed, it is a strategic and deep view that entails a sure understanding of the relationship between the two sides and of the mechanisms of work, stands, and statements required to serve these relations now and in the future.

Jordan: Regent Issues Alert Order in Fear of Extremist Threats

JN0603131896 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 6 Mar 96 p 1

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—Jordan on Tuesday [5 March] asked its security forces to be on the vigil following the wave of militant bombings that killed nearly 60 people in Israel in eight days.

The order to be on the alert was issued by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan, the Regent, during a meeting with senior officers of the Armed Forces and several ministers, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

Petra quoted the regent as emphasising during the three-hour meeting the need to be "vigilant and take precautionary measures" against terrorism.

"It is necessary for Jordan to follow up the current events and help ensure that the Kingdom remains a model country for security and stability that should positively affect neighbouring countries and prevent the developments from negatively affecting the Kingdom," Petra quoted the regent as saying.

He stressed that the wave of attacks that rocked Israel since 25 February, "constitute a dangerous escalation of violence."

He also reiterated the need for urgent international action to fight against terror and said Amman was determined to prevent its territory from being used as a launchpad for attacks on its neighbours.

"Jordan has always been noted for its moderation in the face of all circumstances and it will always be characterised with the spirit of tolerance in true commitment to faith," said the Regent. He urged all Jordanians to be aware of the "magnitude of the challenges and to closely cooperate to protect democracy."

A senior Jordanian official told the JORDAN TIMES that the Crown Prince issued instructions to put into effect "certain steps" to ensure the safety of Jordanians and the stability of the Kingdom.

"The Crown Prince wants to transmit a clear message not only appealing to the people to exercise all possible political maturity but also issued instructions to the competent authorities to take all necessary security steps," the official said.

The official said that these steps are "purely a Jordanian internal affair."

"These are routine steps in such a situation aimed at safeguarding the people of Jordan from any possible disturbance," the official said.

The meeting was attended by acting Prime Minister 'Abdallah al-Nusur, Minister of Interior 'Awad Khulayfat, acting Minister of Defence and Minister of Public Works and Housing 'Abd-al-Hadi al-Majali, Minister of Water and Irrigation Samir Qa'war, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs-of-staff General 'Abd-al-Hafiz Mar'i, and other officials and senior army and security officers.

Dr. Khulayfat and Mr. Qa'war reported on the outcome of their meetings in Gaza Monday with President Yasir 'Arafat and outlined the Palestinian views regarding the escalation of acts of violence in Israel.

Dr. Khulayfat and Mr. Qa'war reaffirmed to Mr. 'Arafat Jordan's absolute support for the Palestinian people and their legitimate leadership in their efforts to regain their rights and independence.

A general appraisal of the situation was made by the concerned ministers and Gen. Mar'i as well as the heads of the public Security and General Intelligence Departments.

Jordan: King's Doctor Says Results of Medical Checkups 'Excellent'

JN0603215896 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 2120 GMT 6 Mar 96

[Announcer-read report over video]

[FBIS Translated Text] We received, via satellite, a short while ago the film clip of His Majesty King Husayn's arrival in Washington.

His majesty was received at Andrews Air Base by Robert Pelletreau, assistant U.S. secretary of state, senior officials from the U.S. State Department, the U.S. ambassador to Jordan, Arab ambassadors and Arab military attaches in Washington, Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti, His Highness Prince Talal Bin-Muhammad, his majesty the king's military adviser, Information Minister Dr. Marwan al-Mu'ashshir, Dr. Ziyad Fariz, governor of the Central Bank of Jordan, the Jordanian ambassador in Washington, Jordan's permanent representative at the United Nations, the Jordanian military attache in Washington, and the Jordanian Embassy staff.

The king was accompanied by 'Awni al-Khasawinah, chief of the Royal Court, and Mustafa al-Qaysi, his majesty the king's adviser for national security affairs and rapporteur of the State Security Council.

His Majesty King Husayn underwent all the periodic medical checkups at the Mayo Clinic over the past two days. Lieutenant General Samir Farraj, his majesty the king's private doctor, said that the results of the medical examinations were excellent and very reassuring and that his majesty, praise be to God, enjoys very good health.

Lebanon: Interior Minister on Security, Fear of Israeli Operations

NC0603151996 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1215 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Michel al-Murr, deputy prime minister and interior minister, today stressed that the government has no intention of backing down on the resolutions it has previously made. General Labor Federation Chief Abu-Rizq emphasized the call for strikes and demonstrations at the end of March if no solution to the problem between the government and the General Labor Federation is reached.

Al-Murr visited the B'abda Palace today. After meeting with President Ilyas al-Hirawi, al-Murr stressed that Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri has no intention of resigning and that there is no government reshuffle. He added that the government has no intention of backing down on the resolutions it previously made, particularly the resolution to entrust the army with security for three months, and that he and President al-Hirawi discussed the current preparations for the Chamber of Deputies elections and the securing of financial credits for the electronic tallying of votes. Al-Murr stressed that the Interior Ministry is prepared to implement any proposals regarding the elections. He voiced his hope that the final election law formula will be completed in April. He said that at present the security situation is in the hands of the Army, which is entrusted with keeping law and order. He noted that the Army has proved its good conduct at this stage. He expressed his fear of Israeli military operations in the south, stressing that the Army is prepared to confront any action.

Lebanon: Defense Minister—No Deported Palestinians To Enter Nation

NC0603172896 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Defense Minister Muhsin Dallul asserted today that no Palestinian deported by Israel will be allowed into Lebanon. He said Lebanon will deny entry to any Palestinian who might be deported by Israel to Lebanese territories as part of the punishments Israel intends to impose.

In a statement to AFP, Minister Dallul said all measures have been taken to prevent any deported Palestinian from entering Lebanon, and clear instructions on this matter have been issued to the security forces.

Lebanon: Crossings Into Border Strip Closed To Stop Palestinians

NC0703083596 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0615 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Council of Ministers has closed off all the crossings into the occupied border strip as a precautionary measure to prevent any Palestinians who might be deported by Israel from entering Lebanon.

Lebanon: Islamic Group To Continue Attacks Against Israel

NC0603192596 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] An organization calling itself the Islamic Revolutionary Army in Palestine has announced that it will continue its operations against Israel despite the decision made by the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, to halt its military operations until the beginning of June. It should be recalled that this organization earlier announced its responsibility, in coordination with Hizballah, for attacks on the Israeli force in the occupied border strip.

Lebanon: Hizballah—'Zionist' Action Will Be U.S. Responsibility

NC0703093096 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 7 Mar 96

[From the "Spotlight on Events" program: "Washington and the Rabid Campaign"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Hamas strikes at the heart of the Zionist entity and Washington declares war against Iran. The reality of the link between the two issues is that the United States wants to suggest that the recent operations against the Zionist entity are organized by foreign sides. The United States wants to give the impression that everything is fine now, that Israel has stopped being an aggressive and terrorist state, and that its relations with the Arabs and Palestinians are based on sincere friendship and ties of cooperation. But deviant elements continue to move off this course. Therefore Washington is trying to take its battle away from the facts that make up the current formula, a formula unchanged by Israel's reaching a suspect agreement with Yasir 'Arafat and his wretched Authority. 'Arafat does not represent the Palestinian people. To his people he is nothing more than a traitor who has volunteered to serve the Zionist objectives and protect the borders and his occupation. Most Palestinian people still view Israel as an arch enemy, usurper, terrorist, and occupier. Thus it is not strange for the jihad against it to resume, or continue, because it has never wasted any opportunity to attack and carry out acts of aggression against the Palestinian and Lebanese people. It caused huge damage and great losses on their land.

Has Israel been transformed into the most victimized side? And when did the blood on the hands of its leaders and executioners dry? That blood has long been flowing. The rabid U.S. campaign against the Islamic Republic is no coincidence nor does it come as a result of convictions or confirmations that Iran is standing behind what is happening. The Islamic Republic is not afraid to confirm that it supports the just struggle of the Lebanese and Palestinian people. This is one thing. Iran's responsibility for what has been happening is something different, which has not been proven by any facts. Therefore Washington is taking advantage of security incidents to wage a political campaign with suspect objectives and goals. Washington cannot succeed in these attempts — just as it did not succeed before. Washington might rely on its international position but it does not have the sound logic to enable it to convince its allies, before all others, of the soundness of its proposals. The accusations leveled against Iran are false and fabricated. This is on the one side.

On the other side, these threats will not budge the Islamic Republic from its stance, a position that supports the just causes of the Arabs, Muslims, and Palestinians. There will never be a day when the Iranian stance will change into one that submits to U.S. blackmail. Although Washington has contacted Arab capitals to ask them to condemn the recent martyrdom operations, it realizes that such condemnation has no value, because it is extracted under pressure and does not represent the truth of the stances of the countries and people in whose name the condemnation is issued.

When Israel decides to use its arm for aggression and tyranny, it cannot expect to be left in peace, and Washington should not scream and yell about this. As for Washington's decision to go along with Israel's threats to the end, this means that we are before a declared U.S. war. Therefore the responsibility for any Zionist military action will be Washington's all the way.

Syria: Delegation to Peace Talks With Israel Returns Home

JN0603212096 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 6 Mar 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Syrian delegation to the Syrian-Israeli peace talks returned to Damascus today from Washington. Dennis Ross, U.S. coordinator for the peace process, told the Syrian delegation that the head of the Israeli delegation received instructions from his government to suspend the talks so the Israeli delegation members may take part in the funeral ceremony for the victims of the recent bombings in Israel.

The Syrian delegation told the U.S. sponsor that Syria remains committed to the peace process to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

Syria: Radio Lauds al-Asad's Achievements, Stresses 'Just' Peace

JN0603191196 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1237 GMT 6 Mar 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: The 33d anniversary of the March revolution is approaching. It was launched by the Ba'th Party, its secretary general, and the masses, and it offered many sacrifices.

This revolution, with its historic national and pan-Arab dimension, is a great revolution. It has been a beacon and a torch for Arab nationalists as well as a basis for the great changes Syria has witnessed thanks to the wise policy of the unique Arab leader Hafiz al-Asad. This policy extends to the future and its vision is comprehensive.

Al-Asad adopted the thoughts of the revolution and of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, thus enriching himself. Meanwhile, he too enriched the revolution and the Ba'th Party with his thoughts, wisdom, and the Corrective Movement which gave the revolution a living meaning and real strength.

The Corrective Movement also placed the revolution and the Ba'th Party on the right path, so the revolution, the Ba'th Party, and the homeland grew thanks to the leader and his achievements. Likewise, the leader became greater thanks to his homeland and masses, so Syria became a pivotal state in the region. Syria now has a presence that enjoys the respect of the entire world.

The reason for this world respect is that leader al-Asad resorted to the people and to unleashing their capabilities in all fields of work and production. Man is the aim and end of life, so leader al- Asad corrected the revolution's path on this basis and led the struggle stemming from his understanding of the role of history in building the present and the role of the present in formulating and building the future.

Leader al-Asad also acknowledged the importance of cohesive and active national unity, so he increased the belief in the nobility of affiliation to history and enhanced confidence in the present through the construction process which included the economic, cultural, social, and other walks of life.

Moreover, leader al-Asad linked development and prosperity to security and stability, so he made every possible effort to consolidate the internal front by allowing all faithful national forces to take part in building the homeland and playing their effective role and by building modern and developed Armed Forces which are a shield for the homeland and its revolution and for the sweat and efforts which turned into a lofty edifice known as modern Syria.

This modern Syria is now the Arab nation's focus of attention and source of hope. By looking toward to Syria, the Arab masses' confidence in the future increases. Syria is proceeding toward the future with resolve and confidence because it is aware that the Arab masses are with it. This is so because Syria is with dignity and construction which are embodied by the national and pan-Arab positions adopted by al-Asad's Syria.

Syria has chosen a just and comprehensive peace which meets the demands of the Arab masses and preserves the rights and dignity of all. It stands firmly alongside its just demands. Syria will only accept a just peace which respects peoples and their rights. The Arab people do not accept the peace that discounts their rights or harms their dignity. At the same time, the Arab people do not want to discount others' rights or harm their dignity. They are with justice and international legitimacy.

This is the Syria of al-Asad, of the Ba'th Party, and of the Corrective Movement. Syria is for all Arabs, and it has been — and will continue to be — the heart of this nation. Therefore, Syria is in the heart and eyes of every honest Arab who appreciates his dignity and seeks to build a future based on security, stability, and development.

Syria: SANA Cites AL-THAWRAH on Increased Tension in Region

JN0603210796 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0930 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Damascus, 6 Mar (SANA) — The newspaper AL-THAWRAH has pointed out that the current tension in the region is due to a host of abnormal factors and circumstances which served as a basis for this tension. These factors include usurping rights, occupying territory, continuing the flagrant violation of the simplest bases of stability and even of one's rights to his own land, his own house, and to life.

In an article today by Dr. Fayiz al-Sa'igh, director general of the SYRIAN ARAB NEWS AGENCY, SANA, the newspaper says: We do not say anything new by emphasizing that unless agreements entrenching the bases of justice and achieving security, safety, dignity, and sovereignty for states in the region are signed — and not agreements entrenching the existing defect — tension in the region will continue to increase. This will make the existing defect a large one, so it will later need doubled efforts and sacrifices to rectify policies and make room for justice.

The paper adds: What was achieved as part of the peace process has thus far not brought peace, and apparently will not do so. This is because peace — in its comprehensive and just sense and in the way the world views it — is impossible so long as it is governed by the known Israeli terms. These terms are based on an incomplete vision of peace on the one hand and a reluctant and vague policy which spreads confusion in the region and increases the current of rejection on the other.

In its article, AL-THAWRAH says: The incomplete vision and reluctant policy will not lead to security and stability. They also conflict with the clear vision and will for peace the whole world sees and seeks. Consequently, what is needed to achieve security and stability and crown the justness of peace is to comply with the international community's trends and abide by the resolutions of international legitimacy as well as acknowledge that incomplete peace does not lead to stability but to tension, and that usurping, ignoring, or circumventing the rights of others does not mean that these rights did not exist in the first place or that they can be disavowed.

The paper adds: History, which recorded the struggle of peoples in ancient and modern times, contains many lessons. Is it a historic virtue to bequeath to coming generations unresolvable problems resulting from unilateral peace and incomplete vision, or should we bequeath them a just and comprehensive peace which is supported, defended, and protected by the people?

Concluding its article, AL-THAWRAH calls on those who advocate real peace to shoulder their responsibility, face reality, and reconsider what has aggravated matters instead of pushing them toward peace, security, and stability. Everyone knows the means to achieve peace, security, and stability.

Afghanistan

Afghanistan: Clandestine Radio Says Pakistan To Begin Repair Work on Road

LD0603124496 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Repair work of a road linking Pakistan to Turkmenistan through Afghanistan is to start this month. According to reports, the road that links Pakistan to Turkmenistan through the Afghan Provinces of Kandahar and Herat has been badly damaged during the past years of fighting. It needs fundamental repairs and resurfacing. Pakistani sources say that the repair work will be carried out by Afghan engineers with the help of Pakistan's national authority of roads. It is to be said that Pakistan has been conducting trade with Central Asian countries for some time through this road. Nasrullah Babar, interior minister of Pakistan, stated that after the repair work, travel time between the Afghan town of Chaman and Turkmenistan will be cut in half. Nothing has been said about the date of completion of the project.

Political observers say that in the absence of a central government in Afghanistan, the Afghans consider this project an act of interference in their country's affairs.

Afghanistan: Ministry Calls Pakistani Road Project 'Direct Interference'

LD0603201496 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Afghan Ministry of Foreign Affairs [ISA], in a note, described Pakistan's recent decision on the Spinboldak-Torghoday highway repair project as direct interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan. The Afghan Embassy in Islamabad handed over the Foreign Ministry note concerning the beginning of repair work on the Spinboldak-Torghoday highway to the Pakistan Foreign Office.

According to the news agencies, the Republic of Pakistan has recently decided to start the Spinboldak-Torghoday highway project to use it for free trade and transit with the Central Asian republics. The ISA has on several occasions asserted in its official statements and protests the fact that Pakistan is blatantly interfering in the internal affairs of our country. It is an accepted international principle that all contacts between independent and sovereign states should be established and practical measures taken through the official agreement of central governments.

The government of Pakistan has violated the protocol of bilateral cooperation signed by the ISA and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1 December 1994, on the repair of the Spinboldak-Torghoday highway. The starting of repair work on the Spinboldak-Torghoday highway by Pakistan for free transit and trade without the formal permission of the central government in the ISA is a blatant violation of international norms, an act which disregards the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of Afghanistan. The ISA considers this course of action illegal. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of ISA considers the recent decision of the government of Pakistan to be direct interference in the internal affairs of our country, and demands that the official authorities of Pakistan refrain from such moves and present to the Afghan side a formal explanation concerning the violations of the Afghanistan-Pakistan cooperation protocol.

Afghanistan: 3 Citizens Injured in Rocket Attack on Kabul

LD0603181296 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Taleban fired eight rockets into Kabul today. BAKHTAR told us that Benazir Bhutto's Taleban fired eight rockets into residential areas of the city, injuring three Kabul residents. The rockets, fired from a southerly direction, damaged three residences as well.

Bangladesh

Bangladesh: Government Releases 3 Detained Opposition Leaders

BK0503163396 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1600 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The government today released three opposition leaders arrested recently. They are Tofael Ahmed and Mohammad Nasim of the Awami League, and Abdul Kader Molla of the Jamaat-i-Islami.

Bangladesh: Police, Opposition Activists Clash in Dhaka

BK0603123896 Hong Kong AFP in English 1227 GMT 6 Mar 96

[Report by Nadeem Qadir]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] DHAKA, March 6 (AFP) — Police fired rubber bullets and teargas Wednesday at opposition activists rampaged through Dhaka and sought to shutdown the city with an impromptu strike ahead of a rally by Prime Minister Khaleda Zia.

Some 15 people were injured during clashes in Dhaka's downtown Gulistan district, where activists damaged several vehicles and showered police with stones and home-made bombs.

Opposition activists rushed at supporters of Zia's Bangladesh Nationalist Party [BNP] heading in trucks and buses for a rally and attacked them with sticks and stones, witnesses said.

The air was filled with the acrid smell of exploding home-made bombs as groups of youths from opposing camps chased each other around the capital's central Motijheel district.

They also torched a minibus near the volatile campus of Dhaka University and two other vehicles elsewhere, said witnesses, who also reported hearing gun shots.

An unconfirmed report said police foiled an opposition attempt to burn a dias in the central Manik Mia Avenue from which Zia and senior party leaders addressed supporters later Wednesday.

Security in the area tight and hundreds of policemen and detectives, closed the avenue to vehicles. Security forces initially kept clear of the violence, but later fired tear gas at the crowd, which scattered.

In the central Purana Paltan area, supporters of opposition fundamentalist Jamaat-e-Islami party and the ruling BNP clashed briefly. Five people were injured as baton-wielding police dispersed activists armed with sticks.

Opposition activists took to the streets and exploded home-made bombs to force shop owners and other businesses to remain indoors and not support the BNP's rally.

Most Bangladeshis seemed to be heeding warnings by the opposition to stay off the streets, as the opposition escalated moves to try to force Zia's government to resign.

Meanwhile police clashed with "Shautal" tribesmen armed with bows and arrows Wednesday during repolling in several parliamentary seats in northern Bangladesh's Rangpur district, postponed earlier because of violence, residents said by telephone.

Residents said the incident in Kaunia area left many tribesmen and opposition activists injured and "several might have been killed" in the clashes. No confirmation was immediately available.

Violence over the past month has claimed at least 50 lives, injured dozens and resulted in hundreds of arrests.

The opposition boycotted nationwide polls on February 15 and although the BNP claimed victory in the elections, independent observers said the poll was "seriously flawed."

Last-minute political manoeuvering by the BNP, and the main opposition Awami League Tuesday left many Bangladeshis in the capital unaware of the rally's timing.

Many shops and businesses were shut and most vehicles left the streets as more people joined the clashes.

The Awami League, led by Sheikh Hasina Wajed, said the strike was a protest against a speech Zia made on national television at the weekend in which she accepted the opposition's main demand for a neutral caretaker government to oversee all future elections.

Zia invited Wajed for talks on setting up the interim "non-party" administrative body, an offer rejected by the opposition who said Zia must first resign.

The opposition had been campaigning for elections under a neutral caretaker government since March 1994 and its MPs resigned en masse in December the same year to push their demands, later calling for Zia's resignation.

Bangladesh: Prime Minister Offers Dialogue for New Elections

BK0603163496 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1600 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The prime minister and BNP [Bangladesh Nationalist Party] chairperson, Begum Khaleda Zia, has appealed to the opposition parties to come to a dialogue to solve the present crisis, if they believe in democracy and constitution. She was addressing a big public meeting organized by mahanagar [city] BNP at the Manek Mian Avenue in Dhaka this afternoon. Begum Zia said she has already offered a nonparty government during all general elections in future. The dialogue is the only way to solve all problems. The people want peace, not chaos and anarchy. She mentioned that during the last two years the country's economy was hampered following strikes, hartals [close down agitations], siege and other programs of the opposition.

About her latest address to the nation and letter to the former opposition leader, the prime minister said she specifically mentioned that ways and means to find out solution of the crisis should be discussed at the negotiating table. Begum Zia said a through discussion a solution can be found about the dates of elections of the seventh Jatiya Sangsad [Parliament]. She hoped that political environment will be created to participate in the elections of the seventh Jatiya Sangsad by all parties through discussion. Begum Zia said a negotiated bill will be introduced and passed through discussions in the sixth Jatiya Sangsad as her party has now two-third majority to amend the constitution.

Criticizing strikes, hartals, and other programs of the opposition, Begum Zia said these programs only bring sufferings to the masses and affect country's economy, which is contrary to democracy and welfare of the people. She listed various developments and massive successes during the last five years of her democratic government and said if democracy is hampered, the entire nation will be affected which is not desirable by the people. Begum Zia urged the opposition to practice positive politics for the greater interest of the people and the nation. She also urged the opposition to stop killings, bomb blasts, strikes, hartals, and other programs to achieve the goal of independence of the country.

Bangladesh: 'At Least' Two Killed in Rangpur Violence

BK0703051296 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 0100 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] At least two people were killed in violence resulting from repolling in three constituencies in Rangpur yesterday. Police said more than 100 people, including 13 members of the police and the BDR [Bangladesh Rifles], were injured. The injured were admitted to Rangpur Medical College Hospital. The repolling was held in Rangpur-4, Rangpur-5 and Rangpur-6 constituencies yesterday. Police said the violence erupted as opposition activists tried to foil the voting and clashed with the security forces.

Bangladesh: Opposition Leader Proposes Deal To End Political Crisis

BK0703053396 Hong Kong AFP in English 0448 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Dhaka, March 7 (AFP) — Bangladesh's main opposition leader Sheikh Hasina Wajed on Thursday proposed a five-point deal to end a two-year political crisis and said the government should take immediate steps to accept it.

Her five-point proposals carried in a statement included:

— the formation of a neutral caretaker government by March 10 after President Abdur Rahman Biswas held talks with all campaigning political parties and fresh general elections by May.

— All process of farcical repolling will have to be stopped and the February 15 elections must be cancelled with the government resigning.

— All opposition leaders and workers in jail must be freed and "false" charges against them withdrawn by March 9.

— Victims of government-sponsored terrorism and repression from all professions must be compensated.

— Security to life and property must be guaranteed as well as improving the law and order situation.

Wajed, whose offer came after Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's televised speech at the weekend and after receiving a letter Tuesday from the premier, warned that failure to accept the proposal would force the opposition to continue with its "non-cooperation" campaign next week.

The opposition boycotted nationwide polls on February 15. The BNP [Bangladesh National Party] was formally declared winner in the elections which independent observers described as having been "seriously flawed."

Zia earlier invited Wajed for talks on setting up an interim "non-party" administrative body and determining other details about the arrangement, but the opposition rejected the talks saying nothing was possible until Zia resigned.

Political violence over the past month has left more than 60 people dead, scores injured and hundreds arrested. At least three more deaths were reported overnight Wednesday.

The opposition had been campaigning for elections under a neutral caretaker government since March 1994 and its MPs resigned en masse in December the same year to push their demands. They later called for Zia's ouster.

Bangladesh: Minister Criticizes Opposition Attacks on BNP Rally

BK0703055296 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 0200 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BNP [Bangladesh Nationalist Party] Joint Secretary General and Food and Agriculture Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan has condemned the opposition's attacks at different places in the capital. Briefing newsmen, (?Food) Minister Bhuiyan also condemned the opposition's hartal [strike] in a bid to (?foil) the public meeting. The attacks were made at different places by the opposition activists on BNP workers and supporters while coming to the public meeting in Manik Mian Avenue in Dhaka yesterday.

India

India: Pakistani Spy Agency's Activities Causing 'Grave Concern'

BK0703090196 Delhi DAINIK JAGRAN in Hindi 4 Mar 96 p 6

[Editorial: "The Admission Causing Grave Worry"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The unambiguous admission by the Central Home Minister, Shankar Rao Chavan, that the Pakistani spy agency, the ISI [Inter Service Intelligence], had sharply intensified its activities in not only UP [Uttar Pradesh] but in the entire country is causing grave concern. In this context the Central Home Minister also mentioned the long open border between India and Nepal which adds to our security worries. It would be better for the Home Minister to raise this issue at a Cabinet meeting, and to also take the UP government into its confidence. It is unfortunate that due to persistent political instability in the State, the necessary measures to tackle the quislings, the Pakistani agents and their supporters in the State cannot be taken earnestly. The result is that the contacts of the Pakistani agents are growing increasingly audacious. It is no longer a secret that many Madarsas (primary Muslim schools) are hideouts for Pakistani agents from where they actively indulge in their nefarious activities. In the context of these Muslim education centers providing a base of operation for the Pakistani agents, the Nadava College — a Muslim educational institute in Lucknow — episode cannot be forgotten. Everyone is aware how the police which apprehended some Pakistani agents — masquerading as college students and staying at a hostel — had to release them due to high level political intervention. The situation was similar in other Muslim Centers in the State — whether in Aligarh, Bareilly, Rampur, Kanpur, or Meerut — where the police failed to take appropriate action against the hideouts of the Pakistani agents due to pressure from influential persons. Police could not deal with an iron hand with these Pakistani agents and their supporters because of a lack of political will and the lure of the Muslim vote banks. These political considerations almost bordering on treason have made the state a haven of quislings, and if the situation is not speedily brought under control the bold assertions that soon these Pakistani agents and their quisling supporters would be thrown out of the State would totally lose their relevance and meaning. How long will such meaningless and deliberately unimplemented resolves continue to be dinned into our ears? When will the much proclaimed strong action against these Pakistani agents and their supporters be taken? What are they waiting for?

As a matter of fact these strong measures could only be taken when national interests take priority over narrow considerations for the vote banks, and when politicians begin to realize that not their winning the elections but the security of the country is supreme. The mean-political-selfish considerations emerge as the greatest stumbling block to giving due prominence to the country's national interest. Unless these are eliminated, foreign agents and their quislings will continue to have a field day. Unfortunately the stance adopted by political parties at regional levels defeats any action against the Pakistani agents. It is they who shield the quislings in the hope of ensuring a large vote bank for their parties. Hence no effective action against foreign agents seems possible. These Pakistani agents not only get protection from Muslim religious heads but pontiffs of other faiths also provide a shield for them. Apparently their activities need to be closely watched. It is high time the Pakistani agents and their supporters in India were dealt with an iron hand, for the country cannot afford to be lenient. There is no justification for treating quislings and foreign agents with any leniency. We have very strong legal measures for dealing with traitors but our security forces are unable to implement them due to a lack of political will and the over-emphasized administrative red tape. Political intervention at every level is the greatest impediment to booking these traitors. Despite the police force's valiant attempts, these narrow minded politicians emerge as a shield to protect the traitors. The situation is really becoming quite alarming. What compounds the confusion more is the many human rights organizations' coming to the rescue of these traitors. Their direct or indirect advocacy for protecting these quislings not only demoralizes our security forces but also eggs on the traitors' temerity. No country worth its name can allow traitors to escape under the guise of human rights considerations. Most certainly it is not a happy augury for the country's future.

It is true that the police cannot book any one merely on suspicion but is not suspicion the first stage in identifying the culprits? After all no traitor has his forehead marked boldly with the word "traitor"! It is only on the basis of their suspicious activities that they are identified by the police. Only by gathering small bits of evidence against suspected persons that the police is able to frame a case against them. All the police force can do is raid them on a basis of confirmed information about their sabotaging activities; but to initiate a case against them it must not be on the basis of suspicion only. Looking to the sharply intensifying activities of the Pakistani agents, politicians must sit together and devise a strategy to not only contain but to weed them out of Indian soil. Is it not amazing that despite our political leaders' much vaunted resolves to check the disruptive activities engineered by the Pakistani spy agency these are getting intensified all the same and threatening the solidarity of a large portion of our nation? Incessant bomb explosions in many parts of our country and recovery of a huge amount of illegal and most deadly fire arms by the police indicate the severe threat to our country's security. What adds to our worry is the fact that these recoveries were not made only at the border regions but in the very heart of our country's capital and in the centrally located province of Madhya Pradesh! The series of lethal arms recovered in Delhi indicates the deep forays that the Pakistani spy agency has made into our security set up, and the level of Pakistani preparedness to destablize Delhi's Jama Masjid area has been a known haven of these Pakistani agents, but now even Bangladeshi intruders are providing them secret protection. This protection to foreign agents in the very heart of our country's capital can create a most disturbing incident any day. Now is the time not only for these Pakistani agents to be identified but for some strong action to be taken to check their infiltration into the country. The Central Home Minister, Mr Chavan, must summon a conference of all political parties to find effective means to take the strongest possible action against traitors and the Pakistani agents, and to develop a consensus of opinion to check their entry into the country. The country's security is at stake and appropriate action must be taken immediately without delay.

India: U.S. Drug Market Battle Makes Nation 'Bogeyman'

BK0603145996 Delhi BUSINESS STANDARD in English 1 Mar 96 p 2

[Report by Sujatha Shenoy in Washington]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India is being used as the bogeyman as giant pharmaceutical companies square off with generic drug firms in a battle for the US market worth millions of dollars.

The generic drug manufacturers are seeking to close an inadvertent loophole in the Clinton administration's implementation of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (Gatt), which extends the patents of several best-selling drugs, including international topseller Zantac.

Opponents argue that changing Gatt provisions could send the wrong signal to several US trade partners, including India.

"Changes in our interpretation of the agreement will not be overlooked by our trading partners in Hungary, India and Brazil who have refused to grant patent protection for US drugs or agrichemicals," Glaxo Wellcome lobbyist and former US trade representative in the Reagan administration William E Brock told the senate judiciary committee on Tuesday.

Drug manufacturers' associations were also using US trading partners to lobby the senate. "It is important that we clearly signal to other countries that a minilateralist's interpretation of Gatt's critically important improvements in patent protection will not be tolerated," testified Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA) president Gerald J Mossinghof, arguing that the US pharmaceutical industry loses $5 billion to piracy annually.

But the perceived threat is little more than a fig leaf. Large drug companies such as Glaxo Wellcome and Bristol-Myers Squibb are reaping an estimated $5 million a day from the loophole in the implementation process. Glaxo alone will get a $2 billion bonanza from a 20-month patent extension on Zantac.

Significantly, administration officials scoff at the large drug companies' concerns. US Trade Representative Mickey Kantor told the senate committee that closing the loophole would not undermine efforts to strengthen intellectual property protection around the world.

"You can be sure that if one of our trading partners tries to overstep the equitable treatment permitted by the TRIPs agreement, or otherwise fails to live up to the agreement, we will vigorously pursue any and all remedies to bring them into compliance with their international obligations," he said.

The loophole occured through an administrative oversight.

Under Gatt, patent protection is for 20 years from the time the application is filed. In the US law, patent protection was for 17 years from the time the patent was issued.

The administration sought to bring both into conformity, but allowed generic drug companies to make products after the original 17-year patent expired as long as they paid royalties. Unfortunately, the administration forgot to change US food and drug administration rules that permit generic drugs to be manufactured only after the original patent expired.

US consumer groups say consumers are paying the price for the mistake. "The Gatt loophole will cost American consumers and taxpayers $2.5 billion because of higher costs," said generic drug committee chairman James P Firman.

Drug manufacturers' disagree, arguing that the increased patent protection is justified because of the enormous costs of developing a new drug.

India: 'Fiercest Critics' of Country's Entry Into ASEM Viewed

BK0703060296 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 5 Mar 96 p 11

[Editorial: "India and ASEM"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] At the moment, India appears to have just got its toe into the door, as it were, in its attempt to join the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) which is in the process of emerging as a new inter-regional forum for development and economic cooperation. The 25 countries participating in the first ASEM, which concluded in Bangkok on Saturday, finally decided to put on hold all suggestions for further expansion of the ASEM. This meant that the door was not shut as firmly as happened at the APEC [Asia- Pacific Economic Cooperation] earlier. This emerged via media to resolve differences among the ASEM members on India's admission. It is now likely that India would be invited to the next summit scheduled to be held in London in 1998. That is the position enunciated by the European members who strongly backed the case for India's entry at the Bangkok meeting. This is a position which is likely to be reiterated during a series of meetings that the troika of the European Union leaders will have with the Indian leaders in New Delhi beginning Monday. The troika, led by Italian Foreign Minister Ms Susanna Angelli, who would be on their way home after Bangkok, will meet Prime Minister Narasimha Rao and External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee.

It may appear somewhat surprising that among the fiercest critics of India's entry were some of its East Asian "neighbours". Two of them, Thailand and Malaysia, are members of the ASEAN, with which India retains the relationship of a dialogue partner. The third opponent was Japan, which supported the entry of Australia and New Zealand against India's. Japan's investment interests in India are already well looked after. The one plausible reason explaining the position adopted by the three countries might be that they would prefer to guard against any dilution of ASEM's East Asian/Pacific orientation. That factor also explained some of the resistance to India's entry to the APEC earlier. But unlike the United States, which has merely to turn around to find itself facing the Pacific, the European Union's historic contacts with the East Asian nations had been through the South Asian land mass. In fact, further strengthening trade links with EU on the one hand and the ASEAN on the other would be the best way to project the inevitability of an Indian presence in the ASEM. While India's exports and the drive of its entrepreneurial class has done remarkably well in the past few years, it needs to do a lot better in its investments in technological development.

India: Bhutan King's Visit Results in Terrorism Agreement

BK0703022996 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India and Bhutan have agreed to work together to eliminate terrorist and criminal activities on each other's territories. Cooperation in the field of security and bilateral relations in various fields came up for discussion during the talks between King Jigme Singye Wangchuk and the Indian leaders in New Delhi during the last three years. The visiting dignitary had extensive discussions with the prime minister, the external affairs minister, and others. Both the sides also signed two agreements on a new hydroelectric project and a cement plant in Bhutan. The Tala hydroelectric project to generate 1,020 megawatts of power will cost around 1,900 crore rupees. The (Dungsung) cement plant, a joint venture with an Indian company, will cost around 400 crore rupees.

India: Daily Salutes Finance Minister's Budget

BK0603152596 Delhi BUSINESS STANDARD in English 1 Mar 96 p 11

[Editorial: "While the going's good..."]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tennis champion Martina Navratilova would approve of Dr Manmohan Singh: he is leaving things in better shape than he found them, which is how Ms Navratilova would have all of us behave. As he so unabashedly pointed out in his Budget speech on Wednesday, the economy has seldom been in such fine fettle. GDP growth at over 6 per cent, inflation at five per cent, buoyant exports, a manageable current account deficit of 1.5 per cent of GDP, 7 million new jobs generated in a year, highest ever foreign exchange reserves. As they say in the advertisements, all this and more.

It is any finance minister's dream come true and, for one who took over when the economy was in shambles, an especially bountiful and well deserved reward. Well may he preen a bit. After all, which finance minister anywhere in the world has been able to turn the economy around within two years of a major economic crisis? Which finance minister has been able to do so with such little pain and so much panache?

That said, it is impossible not to wonder why, having budgeted for certain amounts of expenditure for 1995-96, there has been under-spending on such a large scale. There could be three explanations. One is simply that the 88 departments which underspent — civil aviation, coal, power, atomic energy etc — had asked for more than they needed last year and were unable to spend what they were given. The other is that they were told to put things on hold when, by mid-year, they had not come with firm plans for spending their allocations. The third explanation is that the finance ministry is simply holding back payments which will now be made next year. Probably all of these are true in some measure.

But the net effect is the same: in spite of higher-than-budgeted social sector spending, the fiscal deficit has been kept at a relatively modest 5.9 per cent of GDP. Indeed, if adjustments were made for some extra revenue for which credit has not been taken (such as basic telecom fees) and for the blip caused by small savings — these show up as borrowings by the central government even though 75 per cent of these are handed over to the states — the deficit could be even lower. And going further, if one takes note of the fact that most of the public sector disinvestment that was planned did not take place, the " quality " of the fiscal deficit has improved too.

The legacy

Statistical purists will point out that if the GDP numbers are revised upward for the past three years, the fiscal deficit percentage shrinks even without a reduction in expenditure. Accountants in turn will argue that the actual deficit has gone up in spite of buoyant revenue collection (a good bit of it helped by the falling rupee, which led to rising customs revenue), and in spite also of the squeeze on capital spending. And critics will point out, rightly, that there has been virtually no fiscal adjustment after Dr Manmohan Singh's first year (when the deficit was brought down from 8.3 per cent of GDP to 5.9 per cent). But after all these caveats have been duly noted and allowed for, credit still has to be given to the finance minister and his team for maintaining reasonable control in a pre-election year, when pressures must have been there to open the floodgates.

Overall, therefore, Mr Singh has left his successor with a lot of room for manoeuvre in his numbers for the next year. He has been cautious in setting targets for revenue collection (excise revenue for instance is slated to increase next year by barely 12 per cent). He has fully provided for a small savings boom, so that the current year's unexpected surge is not repeated. He has assumed little revenue from telecom fees, when he should be expecting much more to materialise. And he has provided for a level of pay revision for government employees which may not be required. This seems to be good, old-fashioned conservative budgeting, despite which the fiscal deficit is expected to drop to just 5 per cent of GDP. Unless there are hidden secrets in the budget figures, which will surface later, this is a marvellous legacy, though there will be serious doubts (and some post facto recrimination) over how it has been achieved — by cutting back on productive investments. It hardly needs pointing out that this cutback will have an adverse impact, especially in key infrastructure areas like power, telecoms, roads, ports and railways. These will almost certainly force an economic slowdown, negating the finance minister's hopes of rapid growth in the future. Indeed, the modest growth in excise revenue projected for next year suggests that the revenue officials see a slowdown as not being far away. History may well be very unkind, when it gets written.

Economic management

It could be argued, of course, that if the private sector takes up the slack in infrastructure development left by the government, things will come out all right. But whether that will happen remains to be seen. If the note struck by the Economic Survey is any indication, a great deal still remains to be done towards reforming key infrastructure areas before private investors begin to pour money into those industries . It would thus seem that if economic management on the fiscal side has been good, it has been so at a fairly high cost. Nothing that Dr Singh asserts will diminish the truth of this. He and his party go to the hustings before people realise the enormity of this.

The Budget is also an occasion for the finance minister to reveal how diligently his taxmen have discharged their duties. It turns out that they have done so reasonably well. Over the full five years, tax rates have been mostly lowered, and the rules generally simplified. The big problem of course is that tax, as a percentage of GDP, has dropped significantly. The states too may cavil that they are being constantly squeezed on their share of the total revenue. But in the latest year, tax revenue has gone up well beyond the budgeted levels. The biggest increase is in corporate surcharge: Mr Singh had thought he would get no more than Rs [Rupees] 357 crore last year; he has ended up garnering Rs 2,044 crore . The good news in this is obvious; but the bad news is that the department of revenue seems to have no clear idea of what to expect. Thus, it expects revenue for corporate surcharge to be Rs 2,351 crore next year. But how many would be willing to bet on that? Likewise, in the case of excise duties, there is a shortfall of Rs 1,780 crore — occasioned perhaps by some odd goings-on in the Modvat [Modified Value Added Tax] scheme — in a year when industrial activity has been very buoyant.

In the final analysis, it is hard to deny that the quality of economic management in the last few years has been better than it was for many years before. The country will have to wait for several years, and hopefully some memoirs, to find out how much of the credit for this goes to the finance minister, and how much is to be shared with the prime minister, to whom Dr Singh referred half a dozen times in his politically-oriented speech. Because of the obvious political connotations of what he said, and because there is a tendency for critical figures to be revised after a few years, any verdict on the quality of economic management under Mr Singh must necessarily only be an interim one. But on what is visible at this moment, and until the under-capitalised chickens come home to roost, it seems to have been exceptional.

Iran

Iran 'Stunned' by French Prime Minister's Interpretation of IRNA Report

LD0603215496 Tehran IRNA in English 2121 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Mar. 6, IRNA — Iran is stunned to receive the news of the interpretation made by the French prime minister, Alain Juppe on the comments of the bomb blast in the occupied territory passed from Athens correspondent as the Islamic Republic of Iran official comments. [as received]

Dr. 'Ali Ahani told the French ambassador Piere Masset to convey the Iranian government objections to the top French officials in Paris. Ahani was referring to the news received from the Palestinian sources. Ahani stressed that the charges made by foreign media on Iranian involvement in the bomb blast in the occupied Palestine are but baseless and unfounded and could not be considered as the official western stance. Ahani told the French ambassador that such accusations based on Iranians providing financial support for such terroristic activities is a stand taken by the Zionists as an act of lie to cover up their internal difficulties in the occupied territory in addition to deviating the public from discovering the truth.

The Iranian foreign [ministry] spokesman outright rejected the allegations made by the United States secretary of state, Warren Christopher on Iran's involvement in the bomb blast. Dr. Mohammad Zarif, the Iranian deputy foreign minister in a short interview with IRNA stated that any financial support by Iran in relation to this matter is unfounded and baseless. The deputy foreign minister had earlier stated that the Zionists have been in the practice of resolving their problems and crises by making use of such means.

IRNA had used the first hand report on the several blast in the Zionist occupied territory from the source in Palestine [as received]. However, the western media had incorrectly interpreted the news as the official comment of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Iran: 'Baseless' U.S. Accusations Over Israel Bombings Viewed

NC0603213096 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 6 Mar 96

[Report from the "News and Reports" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] In a clearly-coordinated effort, U.S. and Zionist officials are trying to use the recent incidents in Tel Aviv to level new baseless accusations against Iran. In a statement to CNN yesterday, Dennis Ross, U.S. special coordinator for the Middle East, blatantly disclosed U.S. measures against Islamic Iran. He said the Islamic Republic of Iran must be isolated because of what he described as its support for the Islamic organizations that practice jihad.

These accusations are merely a repetition of accusations to Iran leveled by the prime minister of the Zionist entity on Tuesday [5 March]. Meanwhile, French Prime Minister Alain Juppe made similar statements to the French National Assembly Tuesday. He said France will take diplomatic measures against Iran, claiming that Iran supports terrorism.

These positions and media and political moves prove that the United States and the Zionist entity will use any chance to deal a blow to and harm the status of Islamic Iran. It is enough for one to review the positions of world arrogance and Zionism during the bombing of the Jewish center in Buenos Aires in 1994 and the Oklahoma explosion in April 1995. In both cases, Washington and Tel Aviv rushed to accuse Iran of involvement, but it was later proved to the whole world that the allegations were totally false.

Today, Washington and Tel Aviv are trying to direct new accusations against Iran, partly to pressure it and partly to divert the world public from the internal struggle among the Zionist parties and forces in Israel. This struggle has pushed the Zionist government to the brink of collapse.

The recent incidents in Tel Aviv seriously disturbed Zionist and Western circles. They fear the incidents may lead to the discontinuation of the capitulation process in the Middle East. This is why the Washington-Tel Aviv axis is trying to suggest that what happened in Tel Aviv is not linked to internal differences in the Zionist entity. Based on this premise, this axis is leveling its accusations against Islamic Iran.

Iran: Editorial Says Israel Needs To Create 'Peaceful Atmosphere'

LD0603171896 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 4 Mar 96 p 2

[Editorial: "Islamic Movement Strong Enough To Withstand Israeli State-Terrorism"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A bomb blew apart a packed bus in the heart of Beyt ol-Moqaddas [Jerusalem] for the second consecutive Sunday killing about 19 people and dealing a strong blow to the compromise between Yasir 'Arafat and the Zionist regime.

As usual the Israeli and Palestinian Authority (PA) officials strongly reacted to the incident without trying to understand the roots of the problem.

Why should the oppressed Palestinian Muslims hold fast to such measures for vindication of their legitimate rights? Who is, in effect, responsible for such incidents? And what are the practical ways for preventing such incidents in the future?

The Israeli officials are not unfortunately wise enough to try to find out the roots of the problem. A quick look at Tel Aviv's reaction to the recent incident is a clear witness to the stupidity of the Zionist regime's officials in dealing with a nation whose land has been occupied, rights overlooked, youth imprisoned, etc.

Following is an account of some of the measures announced by the prime minister of the Zionist regime, Shi'mon Peres, to suppress the Islamic movement in the occupied territories. Israel is at "total war against Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and we are determined to bring this organization down to its foundations," said Shi'mon Peres. Another measure declared by Peres is: families of Hamas activists "will have their houses destroyed." Yet he announced that crossing points for people, goods and vehicles would be set up between the two communities. The prime minister of the Zionist regime further said that he may redeploy Israeli forces around the West Bank town of Al-Khalil [Hebron].

'Arafat on his part banned several Muslim groups as a gesture of subservience to Israel.

Israeli ruthless treatment of Palestinians, and state-sponsored terrorism, on the one hand, and unjust terms for peace with Arabs, on the other, are at the roots of such incidents.

A statement issued by a Hamas faction calling itself the Yahya 'Ayyash battalion has claimed the bombing. However, it has also said that it would refrain from further attacks for the months to allow Israel and Hamas to reach a cease-fire. Yahya 'Ayyash is the same person who was martyred by the Israeli government agents with the hope of putting an end to bombings. But it did not happen, on the contrary, the bombings intensified.

Instead of grasping the opportunity announced by Yahya 'Ayyash group to find out practical ways to peace, Peres announces a total war against Hamas. If Israel is really interested in peace, it should, in the first instance, stop state-sponsored terrorism. But unfortunately, the Israeli officials are terrorists by nature. How can we expect peace and fairness from a regime whose highest authority declares that he would destroy houses of the innocent family members of Muslim activists?

It will be a natural right of Muslims, especially members of Hamas, to defend themselves against Israeli state-sponsored terrorism.

Another step that the Zionist regime should take for preparing the grounds for creating a peaceful atmosphere in the region is submitting to the UN resolutions and restoring rights of Palestinians. If Israel continues its expansionist, annexationist policies, peace will never be restored to the region.

Iran: Paper Views Palestine, Terrorism Issues

LD0603100496 Tehran IRNA in English 0637 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, March 6, IRNA — The best solution to the crisis in the occupied territories is a comprehensive peace plan providing for the full vindication of the rights of the Palestinian people, the morning English daily 'TEHRAN TIMES' wrote in its editorial Wednesday.

Unless state terrorism is not stopped, the problem in Palestine will not be settled, it stressed, noting however that instead of trying to remove the root cause of the crisis, Israeli and U.S. officials try to point a finger at their countries as the main reason for the ongoing problem.

Reiterating that Iran is a chief victim of terrorism and that it condemns terrorism in all its forms, it noted in contrast the way the Zionists behave.

"Israel has occupied Palestinian land, imprisoned those who raise their voices, broken their bones in front of reporters' cameras and practically closed all means to peaceful protest," it underlined.

It concluded by saying that if all Palestinian groups are not included in the negotiations, peace will remain elusive in the region.

Iran: Khamene'i Assails U.S., Zionist 'Terrorist Moves'

LD0603171796 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, the exalted leader of the Islamic revolution and commander in chief of the armed forces, this afternoon attended the 27th graduation ceremony of the officer training college of the ground forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

In a speech, he condemned the terrorist moves of the American CIA and the evil-minded organizations working for the Zionist regime. He also expressed his hatred of these ugly and shameful acts.

In this ceremony, which was also attended by high-ranking military commanders and military attaches of a number of foreign embassies, the commander in chief of the armed forces referred to the continuation of the enmity and grudge of the world arrogant powers against the Islamic Republic of Iran, and said: The Zionist news and information media level the charge of terrorism against the Iranian nation and officials. However, in our opinion, terrorist acts are committed only by those who suffer from inherent abnormalities [as heard].

Today, those ruling occupied Palestine, as well as their American backers, are the leaders of international terrorism.

The eminent leader stressed the hatred of the Iranian nation toward the terrorist moves of America and the Zionist agencies. He said: So long as beloved Iran continues to shine as an Islamic country among the other countries of the world, it remains the target of terrorist moves and shameless acts of the enemies of Islam — that is to say the CIA organization of America, the Zionist agencies, and their evil-minded allies.

Those who continue their enmity and conspiracies against this nation because of their continued grudge should know that they will once again suffer defeat. This is because the Iranian nation will stand against them like a solid mountain with the utmost firmness and resilience.

His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i said that the objective of the world arrogance media in repeating slogans against the Islamic Republic of Iran is to divert people's thoughts on the threshold of the Islamic Consultative Majles. He said: Friday is a test day and the day of action, the day of deciding the country's fate for a four-year period. The Iranian nation will once again deliver a strong blow to the mouth of the enemies of Islam by acting decisively.

Stressing the importance of selecting proper deputies for the Majles, the exalted leader said: Those candidates who are faithful, brave, responsible, caring, and serving and who thwart the enemy will form a proper and worthy Majles. Such a Majles in turn will choose a proper and efficient government. The result of all that is a sound move and proper action for the people. Therefore, a proper Majles can be considered as the key for proper work in the country.

The exalted leader of the Islamic revolution, emphasizing the importance of the people's extensive turnout at the elections, said: The people must meticulously research when choosing their candidates, go to the polls out of a sense of responsibility, and vote with the same sense. This Friday the people of the world, particularly the enemies of Islam, will come to understand the true meaning of the revolutionary and committed Iran and will see that a nation — with the experience of 17 years of revolution behind it — is acting with greater expertise, power, and intelligence and will come through this test with pride and heads held high.

Concluding his address, the commander in chief referred to the army and the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps as two powerful arms of the system, which are developing to the utmost. Addressing the graduates of the officer training college, he pointed out that their endeavors at academic and military centers constitute a great service to the brave Iranian nation and its shining history. [passage omitted]

Iran: Tehran Views Fresh 'Terrorist' Attempts by U.S., 'Zionism'

NC0703080996 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 7 Mar 96

[Commentary by the News Research and Commentary Group]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yesterday the esteemed leader of the Islamic Revolution assailed America and the Zionist regime as leaders of international terrorism and again condemned the terrorist attempts and operations by espionage and subversive organizations affiliated with Washington and Tel Aviv. Replying to fresh efforts by international Zionism to accuse the Islamic Republic of Iran, he stated: Terrorism is perpetrated by those who are inherently deviant. Today those ruling occupied Palestine and their American mentors are the leaders of international terrorism.

Following the explosions in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, which are under Zionist occupation, the Zionist regime and the American Government shamelessly and very irresponsibly pointed the finger at Iran, and tried—by creating fresh commotion—to distract attention from the realities in the occupied Palestinian territories. The White House, which has become the Zionist nest and shamed and disgraced the American nation, has resorted to a thoughtless and immature attempt that demonstrates Washington's leaders' grudges and rancor because of their constant disgrace by the great and revolutionary Iranian nation. It has used abusive language against Iran, even trying to attract some of its Western allies into this propaganda eddy so that it will not have to suffer disgrace on its own.

Although it seems that this time too the White House has gained nothing from its efforts, observers believe that while the new propaganda by international Zionism against Islamic Iran is yet another sign of the inaction and helplessness of the leaders of hegemony vis-a-vis the Muslim Iranian nation, it is a fresh attempt to isolate Iran, which is now the biggest obstacle to hegemonism and diktat by the world-devourers.

One of the main objectives of the American-Zionist propaganda is to affect the fateful elections in our Islamic homeland tomorrow, because the enemies of the Iranian nation know that while this nation stands united and decisively supports its revolution, independence, identity, and territory, they cannot infiltrate this wall of resistance and steadfastness.

Iran: Official Objects to U.S. Criticism of Anti-Drug Policies

LD0403171296 Tehran IRNA in English 1418 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, March 4, IRNA — An Iranian official termed the U.S. statement accusing Iran of being involved in production and transit of narcotic drugs as "a baseless report" prepared annually by the State Department, adding that it has no factual foundation.

In an interview with the English-language daily 'TEHRAN TIMES', printed Monday, General Director of the International Department of Iran's Headquarters for Anti-Drug Campaign Qodratollah Asadi, said: "The statement is politically motivated," adding that it is in the continuation of the U.S. hostile attitude in order to put Iran's anti-drug policies into question.

In its annual report on Friday, the U.S. State Department said that Afghanistan, Burma, Iran, Nigeria and Syria were listed as major drug producing and drug transit countries.

Almost all international organizations, including delegations from International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) and United Nations Drug Control Program (UNDCP) have visited installations built up along the borders to fight drug trafficking and admired Iran's efforts in this direction.

Referring to the latest visit of a delegation from INCB in June 1995, Asadi said in the Para 326 of its report released on Saturday, the delegation noted that "the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran is conducting a systematic fight against illicit drug trafficking. The board is aware of the difficulties encountered by the national law enforcement authorities in preventing the smuggling of the Cannabis resin, Opium, Morphine and Heroin into the country and in preventing its territory from being used to transport most drugs to Europe from its neighboring countries."

The board also appreciated efforts of the Islamic Republic of Iran in that direction and stressed that the Iranian Government should be provided with assistance in the form of equipment for law enforcement activities, he told the paper.

"Iran has never asked any assistance from the U.S. for its anti- narcotics campaign," said Asadi, adding this was an indication of negating U.S. claims.

The U.S. Administration had even opposed equipping of Iran and Pakistan law enforcement forces by the U.N. along the joint borders, the official added.

He stressed that only UNDCP and INCB were authorized to supervise anti-drug campaign of countries and prepare their report on the performance of each country, adding that the U.S. has no right to interfere in this regard.

"We strongly reject the U.S. baseless claim," he told the TEHRAN TIMES, saying that the International Police (Interpol) has always lauded Iran for its anti-drug campaign.

On the amount of drugs seized in Iran, he said in 1995 some 126 tons of Opium, 2.075 tons of Heroin, 11.046 tons of Morphine and 15.854 tons of Hashish seized from the smugglers.

On the measures taken by the law enforcement forces to fight drug trafficking, he said exchange of information between Iran and Pakistan, joint border patrol, contacts between the commanders of law enforcement forces of Iran's Sistan-Baluchestan Province with their counterparts in Pakistan and joint border meetings held every four months are among the measures to fight drug trafficking along Iran-Pakistan joint borders.

"Since there is no strong central government in Afghanistan we have not been able to launch joint efforts with this country. Moreover, the annual production of Poppy in Afghanistan is between 2,200 to 2,400 tons, hence, it is difficult to cooperate with that country in this field," TEHRAN TIMES quoted Asadi as saying.

Among security arrangements to fight drug trafficking along the borders, Asadi told the paper, "we have constructed 170 border posts along the 1700 km-long joint borders with Afghanistan and Pakistan. there is a watching tower in each post connecting the posts to each other."

Referring to other measures, he pointed to the building of 1,000 km of paved roads in an effort to facilitate surveillance along the border which has no economic usage but has been built to fight drug trafficking.

About 1,520 km of bulwark have been constructed and canals with 5 meters depth and 4 meters width dug along the borders to check infiltration of smugglers, he said, adding that some dlrs. 200 million have been allotted to such measures.

"So far 1,400 members of the law enforcement personnel have been martyred in their fight against drug trafficking along the borders," the official told the paper.

On the measures to remove poverty and create jobs in order to discourage local people from joining international drug traffickers, he said that several industrial and poultry projects have been established in the region.

Iran's anti-drug measures have been so effective that the drug trafficking routes have been shifted to the Central Asian region, he said.

Iran: U.S. Criticism of Iran's Anti-Narcotics Program 'Baseless'

LD0603182996 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Mr. ['Ali Mohammad] Besharati, the interior minister and deputy head of the anti-narcotics headquarters, has condemned the baseless U.S. claim about Iran lacking effective activities in its campaign against narcotics.

He said: The Islamic Republic of Iran is firm in its campaign against the international drug dealers. Contrary to the baseless U.S. claim, Iran's round-the-clock and ceaseless efforts during the past years have been confirmed by the international organizations.

Mr. Besharati said that in their unrelenting struggle against smuggling narcotics, Iran's Law Enforcement Forces captured and seized 160 tonnes of various kinds of narcotics from the international narcotics gangs during the current [Iranian] year [21 March 95 - 20 March 96] and have thus far sustained over 1,400 martyrs.

The interior minister invited world mass media and press to visit Iran and witness Iran's ceaseless efforts in the campaign against merchants of death in order to prove the falseness of the U.S. unfounded claim before world public opinion.

Iran: Editorial Questions Policies of Palestinian Authority

LD0603145596 Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English 3 Mar 96 p 2

[Editorial: "Where Does the Palestine National Authority Stand?"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] When bombs go off in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, Israeli rulers rush to shout SOS, push Yasir 'Arafat to "tame" the Muslim revolutionaries behind the attacks and above all do overtime to tell the world that the so-called peace process is in jeopardy.

Last Sunday's double-bomb attacks killed 27 people in Beyt ol- Moqaddas and the Zionist capital. As always the Islamic Movement, Hamas, and Islamic Jihad were blamed for the "terror." Israeli premier, Shim'on Peres, warned Mr. 'Arafat of the Palestinian [National] Authority [PA] to act soon to apprehend the bombers or lose "credibility."

The Zionist leader was quoted Saturday [2 March] as saying that "we are not asking 'Arafat to become a defender or servant of Israel. The only thing we want is for him to take charge in his territories."

Actually "President 'Arafat" is not even pretending that he is not a defender of the Zionists next door. Most, if not all, of his moves against Hamas and Islamic Jihad are evidences to indicate where his loyalties lie.

'Arafat has problems with his own people. His belated gestures to portray a democratic image of his authority by holding elections and claiming to support principles of the "peace process" has only alienated Palestinians who believe the polls were premature. The two main Islamic opposition groups boycotted the elections.

Many respected Palestinians righting [word as published] believe the PA chief gave the Zionist enemy "far too many concessions" during the run to the peace accords and in return got nothing concrete from the U.S.-supported Zionists, except a paltry agreement on autonomy.

One major concession by Mr. 'Arafat was to agree to amend the Palestinian covenant that calls for the destruction of Israel. Next week the 88-member Palestinian Legislative Council is slated to meet in Gaza with the above-mentioned section of the charter high on the agenda.

That the charter will be revoked is a foregone conclusion. The council under Mr. 'Arafat's guidance will obviously have a world of reasons and justification to rewrite the charter.

Middle East watchers believe that with Israeli general elections three weeks away and the awkward situation the 'Arafat camp is in at present, the PA is under extreme pressure either to send the "right signals" to Tel Aviv or court disaster for itself from the U.S.- Zionist team.

With the emergence of new developments on the Middle East political scene, the undeniable presence of popular Palestinian factions opposed by Mr. 'Arafat's one-sided affair with his new friends and old adversaries, increase in the use of force and intimidation by the PA against the anti-Zionist movements... call for more wisdom and understanding on the part of Mr. 'Arafat's group before the tiny areas under its control turn into another Algeria or Afghanistan.

For obvious reasons the PA is careful not to amass a lot of bad publicity from outside. But at the same time it has the paramount obligation to address the legitimate needs of all the Palestinians who live under its jurisdiction.

Iran: Kurdish Leader Says Iran 'Behind All Terrorist Acts'

BR0703120096 Madrid EL MUNDO in Spanish 6 Mar 96 p 26

[Interview with Abdula Hasan Zadeh, secretary general of the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran, by Manuel Martorell; place and date not given: "Iran Is Destabilizing the Persian Gulf" — first paragraph is EL MUNDO introduction]

[FBIS Translated Text] Abdula Hasan Zadeh [name as published] is the secretary general of the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran (KDPI), the main armed opposition group against the Khomeyniist government in Tehran. Zadeh, who rose to head the KDPI after the last two secretary-generals were assassinated in individual attacks carried out by Iranian commandos, is appealing for a "null and void" vote in the upcoming elections on 8 March in view of the legal obligation to go to the polls. He is also asking the Iranian people to put the word "freedom" on the ballot slips. He also warned the international community that Iran would continue to be responsible for the expansion of Islamic fundamentalism in the Arab world.

[Martorell] What significance is there in the recent appearance in Iran of people criticizing the government?

[Zadeh] The government tolerates them to show the outside world that it accepts some critical voices, but this is nothing more than a trick by the regime. There are one or two parties which are critical, but in actual fact they are not a serious threat to the government.

[Martorell] There have also been pictures of women with painted lips and colored veils, in violation of the laws of Islam.

[Zadeh] The photos you are talking about are either of women who have left Iran or women who are disobeying the internal rules. There has been no change in these rules. For example, one could mention the cases in which the "Sisters of Zeinab" (an organization which watches women to make sure they comply with the precepts of Islam in their attire) have dedicated themselves to cleaning the lipstick from lips with cloths that have small crystals glued onto them. Another example is this: A new law bans men and women from being photographed together at wedding receptions.

[Martorell] Are you expecting to achieve political change in the short term?

[Zadeh] We are not expecting any change. The government has neither the ability nor the will to do it. It must be toppled with a strong opposition, but I am sad to acknowledge that the opposition is not currently in such a position. There are only talks aimed at reaching an understanding.

[Martorell] What is your party's position in view of the elections on 8 March?

[Zadeh] We are not going to boycott the elections as other opposition groups have asked because we are obliged to vote and the people are going to vote, out of fear of losing their government advantages. For example, if one family does not vote, then when it comes to buying a plot of land, a car, or gasoline it will not be able to buy those things at subsidized prices. If you do not vote, then that means that your children cannot go to university. If we call for a boycott, the people will not follow us. For that reason we are asking them to put the word "freedom" on the ballot, or the party slogan, which is "Democracy for Iran; Autonomy for Kurdistan."

[Martorell] Has Iran changed its position on spreading Islamic fundamentalism?

[Zadeh] Iran rejects all the values advocated by the international community. It is against peace and against democracy. It encourages terrorism throughout the region and world, and it interferes in the internal affairs of other countries. It is destabilizing the Gulf states, and the same thing is happening with Algeria and Sudan. Iran is behind all the terrorist acts.

[Martorell] What evidence do you have of these acts?

[Zadeh] There is no lack of evidence. The best evidence is that they themselves openly state that they want to export the model of the Islamic Republic. Iran has bases in Libya, Sudan, etc.

[Martorell] Is the appearance of a fundamentalist movement in Iraqi Kurdistan linked to Iran?

[Zadeh] In Iraq, there is not only an Islamic movement, there is also a group called Hizballah and another called Revolutionary Hizballah. Both are supported by Iran. There is also the Kurdish Islamic Movement, which is stronger than the others and more closely linked to Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.

[Martorell] What impact might the Middle East peace process have on the Kurdish people?

[Zadeh] I regret the fact that the Kurdish problem is last on the list of problems to be resolved, but if the Palestinian problem is fully settled, then that will have the advantage of turning the world's gaze to our cause. The solution to the Kurdish problem must be based on the establishment of democracy in the region. If there is democracy, then a confederation of countries can be created.

[Martorell] What is the reason for the lack of international support for the Iranian opposition?

[Zadeh] Iran is a large, rich country, and the Western countries do not change their interests out of a concern for human rights. We have nothing to offer them, except our gratitude and apparently that is not enough.

Iran: Velayati Says Afghanistan Key To Control Region

LD0603151296 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto
to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] By interfering in Afghanistan, America wants to bring under its domination Afghanistan's neighboring countries.

This point was made by Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati in an interview with the Indian newspaper THE NEW WORLD. Velayati said: Any country that has influence upon Afghan affairs will gain dominance over its neighbors as well. It is for this reason that America is trying to gain influence in Afghanistan.

On Pakistan's support for Taleban, Iran's foreign minister said: We know that Islamabad is closely watching the situation in Afghanistan, which is natural. However, the interest of Iran, India, China, and Russia in Afghanistan is also natural. Velayati added: We have often told Pakistan to change its stand on Taleban. But this country and a number of other countries — which Velayati named — are supporting Taleban while the Pakistani Government denies this. He said: When Taleban reached the outskirts of Kabul, Pakistan protested to us, asking why we were backing the administration in Kabul. We replied that the government in Kabul is legal because the United Nations, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, and the Non-Aligned Movement recognize it as a legal administration. So we follow them.

On the international scene, he described Iranian policy as coordination between India, China, and Iran in the region. He said: We are trying to form an alliance between those countries in which Russian shall also join us, and thereby create a strong alliance against America in the region.

Iran: Daily Slams UN Human Rights Commission's Stand on Iran

NC0303084596 Mashhad KHORASAN in Persian
14 Feb 96 pp 1, 11

[Political commentary: "Which Human Rights?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Maurice Capithorne, special envoy of the UN Human Rights Commission on Iranian affairs, came to our country on Saturday 21 Bahman [10 February] on a six-day visit. He has been assigned to prepare a report on the state of human rights in Iran and to submit it to the related commission.

Within the past two months, two other officials of this organization, 'Abd-al-Fath Umur and 'Abid Husayn, have visited Iran to prepare a report.

Reynaldo Galindo Pohl, the former envoy of the UN Human Rights Commission, was barred in 1991 from entering Iran because of having prepared biased reports against that country. A look at the record of this commission on approving reports concerning human rights in various countries shows that its officials are pursuing specific objectives in their activities. Choosing a series of countries like North Korea, Sudan, Libya, Iraq, Yemen, and the Islamic Republic of Iran to prepare special human rights reports speaks of the presence of influential powers behind the scenes of this scenario.

Experience has shown that the objective of the United Nations in preparing reports on human rights is not to examine and to report on realities, but to make a series of accusations and fabrications based on allegations by terrorist groups and opponents of the Islamic republic of Iran. The report by the said commission which was approved during the recent session of the UN General Assembly in which Iran was accused of overtly violating human rights (!), is a clear example of this performance. Therefore, it was only natural that because of the continuation of this commission's spiteful policies against our country, the entry of its special envoy to Iran would also be banned. Protests by some domestic press circles on "once bitten twice shy!" was precisely because of all this. However, because of their broadmindedness and positive attitude, our officials once again decided to allow the UN Human Rights Commission's envoy to come to Iran, even if only as a test. Therefore, we should wait and see what report he will prepare in order to make our final judgment. Nevertheless, it would be advisable to make a note of a few points:

1. Criteria of Islamic law and not Western principles and standards should be taken into consideration when examining the situation of human rights in Iran;

2. Existing realities show that women in the Islamic Republic of Iran have a high place and dignity and enjoy all the human and Islamic rights. A look at the figures of female students before and after the revolution clearly proves this point. According to figures in 1356 [year beginning 21 March 1977] only 49,510 female students studied in the universities. This figure rose in 1372 [year beginning 21 March 1993] to 105,667. Also, the role played by women in social, economic, cultural, scientific, and political affairs is known to all.

3. Contrary to the West where religious minorities are granted the least bit of significance and freedoms—and even in the so- called cradle of civilization in Europe, French Muslim students are deprived of education because of their insistence on wearing Islamic attire—in Islamic Iran, on the basis of the Constitution, religious minorities are completely free to carry out their special rites and is some cases have more freedoms than the other citizens.

4. The holding of elections in all the fields speaks of the effective role of the people in the management of the country's affairs and shows that the country relies on the people's votes.

5. The number of newspapers and publications and their qualitative and quantitative rise in the country, as well as the freedom of parties and of political groups are among the other parameters which cannot be easily ignored.

6. As stated by the head of the judiciary, not even one person has been cast into prison in Iran because of having and stating his views, and this is considered to be a great achievement by the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Iran Said Involved in Moscow Thermonuclear Research Institute

LD0603202296 Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian 2 Mar 96 p 14

[Report from London by the Central News Unit]

[FBIS Translated Text] A thermonuclear research institute has been opened in Moscow in which Russia, China, Iran, and India are participating.

According to a report by the Central News Unit from London, the AL-HAYAH daily writes: The director of Moscow's nuclear research center announced that in the past three days, a conference has been held with the participation of representatives of Russia's energy ministry, China's nuclear center, Iran's atomic energy agency, and India's plasma organization. They have decided to form a four-sided Asian fund to coordinate efforts by these countries in thermonuclear research.

He added: In future, the fund may join an international project to set up thermonuclear power stations with a budget of $5.8 billion in which Russia, America, Japan, and Europe are members. So far $1.2 billion have been invested in that project for technical research.

Iran: Commentary Expresses Concern on Turkish Moves at Border

LD0603164996 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 3 Mar 96 p 16

[Unattributed commentary: "Turkey's Border Threats Will Isolate it"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Bulent Ecevit, the leader of the Democrat Left Party and former Turkish premier, in an interview yesterday with HURRIYET, called for the occupation of parts of Iraqi territory by Turkey. In his view, if such changes were made in the Turkish-Iraqi borders the Turkish Army could more easily control the activities of the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) in northern Iraq, and prevent the entrance and exit of dissidents to and from that country. [passage omitted]

Violating the sanctity of borders has become common practice by Ankara. Many times the political and military officials of that government have called for a change in the borders, particularly those with unstable neighboring countries. On a number of occasions that country's military and security forces, under various pretexts, have crossed the border. Iraq has suffered by such ambitious moves due to its government's instability and decrepitude. [passage omitted]

Regardless of the peculiarities of the political officials ruling over a country, their domestic situation, and the interests of foreign powers, good-neighborly relations are necessary. Turkey is taking advantage of Iraq's adverse situation and the international atmosphere. It is not just a case of Iraq's illegitimate political officials; borders are naturally sacred. To penetrate international borders, and even to spread rumors and exert psychological pressure about border changes, would render future regional relations unstable. But, unfortunately, the Turkish authorities are consciously disregarding their neighbors' concerns about it, and covert foreign backing has made them more audacious.

Ecevit has declared that: "Turkey would face objections from other countries after every it violated northern Iraq, while it would face such objections only once if changes were made to the borders between the two countries. But it would be able finally to crush the opposition in northern Iraq." However, the matter would not end so easily. The breakdown of trust in the Turkish authorities because of their lack of observance of good-neighborly relations would increasingly force other regional countries to take collective or bilateral measures against Turkey. Turkey's sabotage of the division of the Euphrates' water has brought the stances of the two age-old enemies, Syria and Turkey, closer together. Now that the more important issue of the borders is raised Turkey will be more and more under suspicion.

Iran: Regional Cooperation Alternative to Foreign Interference

LD0603205096 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 3 Mar 96 p 2

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati's current tour of Central Asia will definitely open another chapter in Iran's relations with the regional countries.

Today, Central Asia is Russia's strategic underbelly and Iran's geopolitical backyard. Fortunately, Iran and Russia have developed close relations since the disintegration of the former Soviet Union. It is a reciprocal understanding: to Iran, Russia is an independent, sovereign state which can play a significant global role provided it does not heed U.S. pressures; of course, Iran also plays a crucial role in its region, which is strategic for Russia.

Both Iran and Russia, therefore, advocate peace and regional cooperation in Central Asia.

Iran has played a constructive role in peace efforts by trying to moderate demands of belligerent parties in Central Asia.

The latest such effort was Iran's mediation between the Tajik government and the opposition, leading to the extension of the cease-fire for another three months. The previous cease-fire terms was agreed in Tehran in 1994.

Iran has already successfully mediated in Azerbaijan and Afghanistan in a bid to stop bloodshed in the neighbouring countries. Not only through political initiatives, but also through economic activities Iran has tried to strengthen regional ties in order to pave the was for stability, peace and regional development. Extension of regional railway, joint ventures and establishment of border markets are among measures Iran has been advocating to strengthen regional cooperation.

Iran's message in expansion of regional cooperation is clear: regional countries can count on themselves instead of depending on foreign powers. Indeed, regional cooperation will be the best measure to put an end to foreign interference in the region.

Iran has practically sent the ball into the court of regional countries in this regard. It is time they reciprocate Iran's efforts.

Iran: IRMO Opposes 'Monopolistic' Power in Majles

LD0603225796 Tehran SALAM in Persian 4 Mar 96 p 9

["Report on question and answer session with the Islamic Revolution Mojahedin Organization: Nabavi: The "Traditional Right" has been weakened; Salamati: Relations with America threaten our independence" — SALAM headline]

[FBIS Translated Text] Note: In recent weeks, the Iranian Islamic Revolution Mojahedin Organization [IRMO] has been holding a number of question and answer sessions with the aim of informing the public about the organization's stances. What follows are the details of the organization's views on the Majles elections, as expressed by Mr. Mohammad Salamati, the IRMO's general secretary, and Messrs Behzad Nabavi and Mohsen Armin, who are two distinguished members of the organization. The following text also contains replies to questions put forward at the meetings. [last graf contained in separate box]

In these sessions, Mohammad Salamati made some remarks about the position of the organization vis-a-vis the fifth Majles elections.

He said: Despite our reservations about the atmosphere surrounding the elections, we will still participate in them and will present our list of candidates. He said: It is only remotely possible that we will gain the majority in the Majles, because the bulk of the Imam's Line [khatt-e emami] faction (left) members are not taking part in the elections, and the other factions enjoy considerable means and resources, which will be to their advantage.

No matter how many members of the Imam's Line faction go to the Majles, they should work there together. He added: We favor the safeguarding of freedom and the materialization of social justice objectives; in other words things that have come under threat from a particular faction.

Referring to the issue of economic regulation policies, he said: We do not support this policy and, as we have announced earlier, if we are elected to the Majles, we will not support this policy. Instead we will support and pursue a mixed economic system, as stipulated by the Constitution.

On the issue of consultative supervision, he said: The possibility exists that some factions might use this issue for their own interests. This law must be changed in order to meet people's interests.

Behzad Nabavi, a key member of the IRMO, was another participant in these meetings. In the first meeting, held before the start of the vetting of the election candidates, Nabavi said: There is a strong possibility that the vetting process will be carried out in an unhealthy fashion, because a certain faction has significantly influenced this process. Referring to the position of the supporters of the Imam's Line and the so-called leftist faction toward the elections, he said: We have no differences of opinion with the other groups in the Imam's Line (left) faction regarding the possibility that a narrow-minded approach may be adopted toward the issue of the candidates' vetting.

Nevertheless, the IRMO has decided to take part in the elections despite this, even if — as some believe — the end result might be the rejection of some of its candidates and the start of poisonous propaganda by some of the opposite factions, which might come forward before the start of the actual elections and level charges such as corruption, embezzlement, etc. against us.

He added: If those who want to stop us from getting elected to the Majles want to act diplomatically, they should at least use the "suitability rejection" ploy in cases where our candidates have the chance to get elected. He said: Of course our participation in the elections has been based on certain conditions. If they reject our candidates because of illogical reasons without telling the people the details, then of course we will take the necessary action. We will divulge the facts and will then pull out of the race. He added: If they reject our candidates, then they had better explain their reasons to the people without thinking of our name and reputation.

Question: Can one consider your recent positions as a kind of veering toward the liberals?

Nabavi: The full details of our stances have been clearly published by ASR-E MA newspaper and the other statements of the organization. I do not see any similarity [with the view of the liberals]. If you study these articles, you will see that we have fully explained our stances.

Question: Can the left faction form a coalition with other factions?

Nabavi: As we have stated before, this is not possible. In our election statement number three, we said that there was a large gap between us and the other factions, and that a coalition was not possible. In our future statements or our articles in ASR-E MA we will explain why we will not form a coalition with the modern right faction (the Servants of Construction faction).

Despite our meagre financial means and resources, we have single- handedly entered the election race, and we will not form a coalition with anyone but the Imam's Line (left) groups. On the other hand, we believe that other groups must also try to prevent a particular faction from monopolizing the state power. This is because a faction which politically speaking believes in despotism [estebdad] and favors capitalism as far its economic ideology is concerned, will not give anyone any breathing space should it succeed in monopolizing political power.

Therefore when we welcome the publication of candidates list by other groups, this does not mean we accept and support their views. Basically, what we want is to stop monopolistic power in the Majles, and by extension, in the government. This is because some factions are planning to gain an absolute majority in the Majles and then win the presidential elections, which would mean that they will have all three state powers under their control...

We have therefore advised both factions (modern right and the new left) to be present on the arena. This is not just for the sake of elections, and we have been saying this for the last 18 months. The new left should not be deceived by the traditional right faction's claim that we are fundamentalists [osul-gera] like yourselves.

The experience of the honeymoon of the modern and traditional right factions in the fourth Majles is a warning to the new left and, for that matter, to everyone else. This is because they used to say that the enemy of Hashemi [Rafsanjani] is the enemy of God and the Prophet. However, today they are doing exactly the opposite. That is to say that once they saw that a movement other than themselves has been created, they have started to threaten its members with ridicule and various other ploys. In our opinion, the new left will be next in line, and will be at the receiving end of this attitude, which this time will be even harsher than before. Of course we view the fate of this faction's slogan of obedience to the leader in the same way as we view the destiny of its slogan of support for Hashami [reference to the two parts of the election campaign slogan of the Militant Clergy Associaton in the fourth Majles elections; ie: Support for Rafsanjani, obedience to Khamene'i].

Question: You say that social justice is being threatened. Can you say by whom?

Nabavi: In our opinion, what is currently being implemented is the economic regulation policy, in which both the traditional and modern right factions still believe. This has also been determined and accepted in the country's second development plan. However, this was also implemented during the first development plan, despite the fact that the text of the plan said otherwise.

In our opinion, there is no room for economic justice in the market economy system, and regulation in fact means market economy. Social justice has no place there. The sacking of workers and the reduction of subsidies are just a few examples of the consequences of this policy. These consequences are absent in a mixed economy.

We believe that the [economic] regulation policy in practice strikes fatal blows to society and creates political problems. Social justice is absent in this policy, regardless of the fact that the traditional or the modern right factions want this or not [as received]. We are worried about the future of the revolution and the political system.

Question: Has the IRMO considered the notable pressures that it is being subjected to during the course of elections?

Nabavi: We had hesitations about taking part in the elections, and we have only entered the arena on certain conditions. We do not claim that the same thing which happened in the fourth Majles is going to happen now. We believe that the internal and external conditions make it necessary that the same thing should not happen. However, it is quite possible that the same type of attitude may be shown toward our candidates. In any case, we will move step by step, and if we face insurmountable obstacles and illogical attitudes, we will withdraw our candidates.

Question: Your participation in the elections might be considered as an act that will give legitimacy the victory of the traditional right faction, given the resources they have at their disposal. Why are you doing this?

Nabavi: We are a political organization and cannot remain indifferent to the society's important issues. We have no choice but to take part in the elections. With our participation and our clarification of the stances of the traditional right faction, we will be able to divulge the facts and inform the people much better. In our opinion, the traditional right has lost its earlier standing and has become weaker.

Question: What do you say to those who say our problems will be solved if we establish ties with America?

Nabavi: Our revolution in not accepted by America. The collapse of the Soviet Union was a good experience. What has happened to those who have given their country to America after the collapse of the Soviet Union? What have they achieved? If we establish ties with America, the revolution's honor and integrity will be destroyed. On the other hand, they would only come here with the aim of changing the way we behave and think.

Question: The Imam's Line groups have boycotted the elections. Would it not have been better if you too had done the same?

Nabavi: None of the Imam's Line groups have boycotted the elections. Refusal to submit a list of candidates is different from boycotting. Some have said that they are not going to put a list forward. This does not mean that they want to discourage the people from taking part in the elections. We consider the system our own, and we therefore oppose a boycott. On the other hand, we also disagree with unconditional participation in the elections.

Iran: Jannati Warns Against Foreign Reporters' Distortion

LD0603164796 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The deadline for election campaigns runs out at 2400 tonight. To give you dear ones more details and about certain preparations made for elections we now have a direct link with the

Guardian Council. Mr. Foruqi, we are ready to hear your report.

[Foruqi] Hello Mr. Afshar and dear viewers of the Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran. As you said, the deadline for election campaigns runs out at 2400 tonight. For that reason we have come to the Guardian Council and are in the presence of His Eminence Ayatollah Jannati, secretary of the Guardian Council. We ask him to give any explanations he can about the holding of the elections and also if he has any recommendations.

[Begin Jannati recording] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. [passage omitted] We are glad that the people are alert, particularly since the enemy has found another excuse to attack and hatch a new plot against the Islamic Republic. After the explosion in Israel, the Americans used it as an excuse to accuse us. Of course, there is nothing new about that. It is their modus operandi. [passage omitted]

The people should know that the foreign reporters who have come here do not mean to publish correct information. They mean to find weaknesses, to magnify them, and deliver them to our enemies to use. [passage omitted] [end recording]

[Foruqi] [passage omitted]

Iran: Daily Comments on Ethics in Majles Elections

LD0603161796 Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English 4 Mar 96 p 2

[Editorial: "Election Ethics"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Elections in the Islamic Republic of Iran have their own ethics. Contrary to other democracies, where a candidate can easily win if he can afford to spend more than his rivals on election campaigns, in our country the Constitution has stipulated what is allowed and acceptable.

All candidates are provided with equal opportunity to introduce themselves to the electorate. This has to be done in a simple and straightforward manner. And moreover, there is a time limit, a week, to wrap up the campaign.

The primary purpose for limiting the campaigning both monetarily and in time is that candidates lacking material wealth but rich in morality, virtue and human values, should not be handicapped due to lack of funds to help project a positive image of themselves via major publicity campaigns.

It is not a secret that some contesting the Fifth Majles elections have ignored the election ethics. Much earlier from the time officially announced for a candidate to commence campaigning, huge banners were erected on almost all squares and crossroads of the capital. The publicity materials, depicting the national flag proclaimed "national unity, continuation of construction, and prosperity of Iran."

Questions on the legality of this type of election propaganda were raised in the press. Nevertheless, as pointed out by the Persian daily KAYHAN in its editorial on 27 February, no explanation was forwarded by those involved.

It may be recalled that head of the supervisory board of the Guardians Council, Hojjat ol-Eslam Kazem Seddiqi, in an interview with KAYHAN Saturday [2 March] noted that displaying the typical metal or cloth banners by some independent candidates and/or groups is against the law.

In view of the fact that this daily has an independent outlook, it is not concerned which particular faction gets more seats in the next legislature.

Our outlook is that the election process should be strictly in accordance with constitutional law. Only then will the nation, which has paid a high price to create an Islamic Constitution and establish an Islamic Republic based on it, be able to send the most virtuous, God-fearing and qualified people to the law-making institution.

Iran: Vice President Questions Media Impartiality in Elections

LD0603180596 Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian 3 Mar 96 p 2

["A topical critique by (Vice President) Seyyed 'Ata'ollah Mohajerani: Radio and Television Support a Certain Party in Upcoming Majles Elections"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In a debate at the Amir Kabir Industrial University, the topic of discussion was that public facilities should not be used [for electioneering].

It was said that although city advertising boards do not belong to the council, the few square centimeters on the ground at the base of the boards are public space, because the land belongs to the council. Fortunately, the concern about a few centimeters was alleviated by the assortment of advertising hoardings [as published]. But I think there is a few inches worth of concern left! I mean the use of the television screen and of course the voice of the radio. In a perfectly obvious way the Voice and Vision produce their programs — such as Winter Nights, which shows interviews with representatives — just like the advertising posters. The camera movements and the soundtrack clearly show that the producers are in the service of certain election groups. So is the manner of preparation of the news bulletins, the slides, etc,

etc. It is amazing that certain afternoon newspapers, which scrutinize everything in the form of sarcasm and witticism and articles, have not made the slightest reference to the one-sided performance of the Voice and Vision. [passage omitted]

Those candidates who have access to the Voice and Vision reap the benefit, and those who do not have access are among the audience. Happy viewing!

Iran: Paper Criticizes 'Major Defects' in Election Campaign

LD0603164296 Tehran IRAN NEWS in English
3 Mar 96 p 2

["Future Elections Should Be Held in Healthier Circumstances"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Candidates for the fifth term of the Majles began their election campaign on Thursday, and with the passage of time the campaign for 8 March election is expected to become more hectic.

In Tehran the campaign goes on with increasing fervor. The capital is witnessing excited activities including door-to-door canvassing of electors, huge posters and banners on the main streets and advertisements in the local dailies.

The election process, however, seems to be suffering from two major defects which create hindrances in the smooth flow of the election cause.

1. The process of assessing the candidates' qualifications is tiresome. There are four phases, including evaluation by screening committees on city or town level, provincial level, national level and finally at the level of the Guardians Council.

Moreover, the Guardians Council allows the candidates just one week for the election campaign. Experts believe a one-week period is not enough for the candidates to introduce themselves and for the public to get to know them. Preparing publicity materials and distributing them among the voters in one week is almost impossible.

2. Another apparent drawback in the election mechanism is the lack of political parties in the fabric of our society. There are only a number of influence groups or factions whose plan for the country or election manifesto is not known by the electors.

Of course the factions in the election arena are airing no indication of exactly how general development and social justice are to the brought about.

The situation is even worse in the rural areas. In the absence of political parties, empty slogans are being chanted, and insignificant issues, purely of local nature, are discussed in the elections campaign.

Issues of national, regional and international levels are rarely on the agenda of election campaign.

We hope the authorities as well as the factions or political groups will focus their attention on these vital aspects of the election process and let the future elections be held in healthier circumstances.

Iran: Arrests Made for Misuse of Public Funds in Campaigning

LD0303180596 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian
1630 GMT 3 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The central committee in charge of supervising the country's elections has issued an important communique, thanking the executive and supervisory forces involved in the elections for the serious manner in which they are dealing with the election's day-to-day issues and the revolutionary court judges who have confronted some violations in Tehran by making timely decisions.

They announced: On the basis of documented evidence, as foreseen, some government organs supporting some of the candidates have committed offenses by using public resources. As a result of this, the offenders have been arrested. They have also confessed. Thus, before such a time as the continuation of such violations leads to dissatisfaction among the people and harms the soundness of the election, it is declared: According to the wishes of exalted God, offenders will be dealt with regardless of their position. In addition to this, if this advice and guidance is not heeded, the relevant organ or organs may be named in any future communique.

Iran: Tehran Candidates Outline Views on Major Principles

LD0403110596 Tehran IRNA in English
0743 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, March 4, IRNA — Three candidates for Tehran constituency in the next Friday Majlis elections in a debate yesterday outlined their views on issues of social justice, development, public participation and technocracy.

The round table discussion, organized by IRNA and held in its headquarters, was attended by former Energy Minister Hasan Ghafuri-Fard, former labor minister 'Abolqasem Sarhaddizadeh and head of the Labor House 'Ali Reza Mahjub.

Ghafuri-Fard said that materialization of social justice is a prime objective of the Islamic Republic of Iran which paves the way for flourishment of talents. Furthermore, he added, social justice will induce development.

He stressed that in the absence of social justice growth and development will not be achieved and there will be no flourishment of talents and potentials.

On the subject, Sarhaddizadeh said that social justice and development complement each other and one cannot exist in the absence of the other.

He added that presently there are class differences and gaps in the society. "it is not befitting the administration and the Majlis to witness accumulation of wealth by a number and impoverishment of the majority," he said in the debate also attended by a number of journalists.

Providing the minimum living conditions such as food, housing and occupation should be main concerns, the former labor minister added.

Sarhaddizadeh predicted that technocrats will not be successful in the next Friday elections for the 270-seat Majlis.

He said that the technocrats do not have the readiness to be present in the Majlis. He expressed hope that the committed, revolutionary and specialists will be elected to the Majlis.

Mahjub said that justice is the foundation of all policies in the Islamic system.

Mahjub pointed out that people more than anything else become annoyed with discrimination. He said he is for justice with development.

According to Mahjub, public participation in all aspects of life, political, economic, social and cultural affairs are of immense importance.

"In no other system in the world people have had such a high degree of participation in affairs of the society," he said.

Mahjub emphasized that with the removal of problems on the way of production, public participation will increase further.

According to Mahjub, investment should be directed towards production.

On public participation, he said that parties and groups are the best means of attaining this goal and added that grounds should be prepared for encouraging emergence of groups and parties for greater involvement in political affairs of the country.

Mahjub stressed that technocracy is a must for development and growth. "If specialists and professionals are not elected to the Majlis, the society will suffer," he pointed out.

Iran: Election Monitoring Head Says 'No Major' Violation of Rules

*LD0403200696 Tehran IRNA in English
1832 GMT 4 Mar 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, March 4, IRNA — Head of the board of monitoring the Majles elections announced on Monday that there has been no major violation of election rules nor breach in the security observed so far.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Sadreddin Shari'ati noted that there is a sound security ground for Majles elections in the country and no incident among supporters of different candidates has been reported.

He explained that central monitoring board have formed units comprising people from different walks of life such as professors, justice officials and Islamic devoted personalities in Tehran and other cities, to supervise the election procedures throughout the country. In addition, some 30,000 persons will be organized into teams in the different part of the country to help carry out Majles elections smoothly.

He finally said that the monitoring board is trying to assign an inspector for each balloting box, if the plan does not materialise one inspector will supervise every two balloting boxes.

Iran: 40 Offices Set Up in Tehran To Tackle Election Complaints

*LD0503093796 Tehran IRNA in English
0857 GMT 5 Mar 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, March 5, IRNA — 40 special headquarters have been set up in the Governorate of Tehran which are commissioned by the chief justice to deal with cases related to the election campaign, the English daily 'TEHRAN TIMES' reported Tuesday, quoting Deputy Chief Justice Ramezan Ranjbar.

Ranjbar disclosed that 40 campaign-related complaints have been filed, of which 13 have been probed while investigations on the remaining cases are underway.

He stressed that most of the offenses occurred on the first day of the election campaign.

The paper also said that 5,200 ballot boxes will be installed throughout Tehran and Iranians born on or before March 8, 1981, can cast their votes upon presentation of their identification certificates.

Furthermore, in case of a request from the Interior Ministry and pursuant to a circular issued by President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, all state organs and ministries are required to provide the supervisory bodies and the guardians council all the necessary fcilities to ensure fairness in the forthcoming voting to the 270-seat Majles.

Iran: 'Broad' Foreign News Coverage Promised for Majles Elections

LD0503123196 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 5 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Journalists, cameramen, and correspondents from various news agencies, television channels, and newspapers from 70 countries have declared a wish to provide news and video coverage of the elections for the fifth term of the Majles.

The director general in charge of the press and foreign media at the Ministry of Islamic Guidance announced this information in an exclusive interview with our correspondent today and said: The presence of this many reporters reveals the importance attached to the Majles elections by foreign media. He added: In order to provide broad news coverage throughout the world, a range of interviews have been arranged with executive and supervisory officials, as well as with the leaders of the country's different political factions. In addition to this, they [foreign reporters] may carry out interviews with various strata of the people.

He said that the presence of so many reporters in our country was unprecedented since the victory of the Islamic revolution, and added: The required coordination has been put into effect so that if any other foreign media so wish, visas will be issued at the earliest opportunity for their reporters. He stressed: All the necessary facilities have been prepared to allow comprehensive coverage of the Majles elections so that this task can be carried out in the best possible way.

Iran: Official Says Election Campaign Monitoring 'Moving Smoothly'

LD0403195596 Tehran IRNA in English 1707 GMT 4 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, March 4, IRNA — Head of the elections monitoring bureau in Tehran Hojjat ol-Eslam Seddiqi said here Monday that the monitoring of the fifth Majles elections was moving smoothly.

Talking to IRNA, Seddiqi said that in a session, attended by governors general as well as executive and elections monitoring delegations here on Sunday, the participants adopted necessary arrangements for preventing any violation of the election rules.

As for collection of election posters put up in the restricted places by campaigning groups, Seddiqi said that investigations made so far show that the candidates did not have any ill intention, adding that their move was merely based on imprecise assumption and incorrect interpretation of the rules governing elections. The groups themselves, he added, removed the posters immediately after they became aware of their mistake.

In the end he concluded by saying that the Guardians Council has permitted the installation of posters by anyone, which would serve a general purpose of the election campaign.

Iran: Workers' Association Official on Election Participation

NC0603122796 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 19 Feb 96 p 15

[Interview with 'Alireza Saber, the secretary general of the Islamic Workers' Association, by unidentified RESALAT economic correspondent in Tehran; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [RESALAT] In your opinion, what are the traits and requisites of a competent deputy?

[Saber] He should be well-versed in religion and be religious. He should be humane and compassionate to people's hardships. He should uphold belief and commitment to the absoluteness of the Velayat-e Faqih, and adherence to the Constitution. He should be conversant with the executive apparatus of the system, and possess credentials in one of the executive, legislative, judicial, cultural, or economic fields. He should have an anti-arrogant spirit, be familiar with the system's domestic and foreign policies, and should consider himself a trustee of the people. These are the characteristics of a competent deputy.

[RESALAT] Will the Islamic Workers' Association [IWA] introduce an independent candidate for the fifth Majles elections or will it support any particular group?

[Saber] As we hold similar views, we will support the candidates of the Tehran Militant Clergy Association [TMCA], and initially, 29 of their current candidates were favored by us. We believe that the devout and revolutionary workers will wholeheartedly support the TMCA's candidates.

[RESALAT] In general, what is the stance of the IWA in the fifth Majles elections on the participation of the people and the political groups?

[Saber] The IWA, along with all the people, especially the dear and noble workers of Iran, will participate actively in the elections. In particular, I wish to point out that the healthy participation of all the political groups is a national and religious obligation, and the political groups have an obligation to please the Almighty and do whatever is in the interest of the system. They should present their programs and plans lucidly and leave the final decision to the people, who will make the best choice when they see suitable conditions in the elections.

The experiences in the fourth round of Majles elections are eloquent testimony to the fact that our people are endowed with the best political acumen in the world and will not vote for slogans that are not backed by actions.

[RESALAT] Nowadays, a new group has been formed known as the Functionaries of the System, which intends to nominate its candidates. What are the stances and postures of the members of this formation so far? What is your stand in this regard?

[Saber] I wish to mention some points regarding this group. Some of the people in this group do not have amicable viewpoints on the issues favored by the great leader, that is, on not having relations with the United States and on the cultural assault they consider a cultural exchange.

We also observed a controversy in the favoring of Vekalat-e Faqih [vicegerency] over the Velayat-e Faqih [rule by the supreme jurisconsult] in one of the newspapers reporting to this clique. In addition, there have been other instances, such as the debate on development versus social justice, which cannot be recounted here but are antithetical in general to the schools of thought now prevailing in the fourth Majles. It was also anticipated that the members of this group would enter the scene with a specific manifesto like all the other formations. There are also some questions regarding their extensive and predetermined propaganda in Tehran and the funds that have been expended for this purpose.

Two newspapers, namely **HAMSHAHRI** and **IRAN**, which utilize government resources, also have a unilateral bias. On the other hand, the candidates to be introduced by this groups will be forced to be government deputies which, in my opinion, will be in conflict with the independence of the Legislature.

Iran: SALAM Denounces Non-Participation in Elections

NC0603093196 Tehran SALAM in Persian 25 Feb 96 p 2

["Special Answer to a Telephone Call" column]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Unidentified caller] Since in Iran no punishment is envisaged for those people who do not participate in the elections and people are left free to choose whether or not to participate, the conclusion that can be drawn is that the people who can vote but do not are expressing their opposition with the government's economic, social, political, and other programs. What is your opinion?

[SALAM] With due respect to this reader, we should state that we cannot agree with this opinion because existing facts do not prove it, either in Iran or in other countries where there are official parties and elections are held much more freely than they are in Third World countries—at least, this is the picture that is portrayed. In these countries, a considerable percentage of the people do not participate in the elections. But this non-participation does not mean opposition with the current policies.

Of course, we do not want to completely negate this reader. However, in view of the fact that there are various parties and candidates with different views in these countries, the number of people who do not participate in the elections as an expression of opposition with the existing situation are few, since those people who do not support the ruling party and its policies can vote for other parties or for individual candidates. The major reason for non-participation is the weakness of political culture and the failure of the people to take participation in their own fate seriously. This weakness is aggravated by two factors:

A. The performance of those in power whose slogans and propaganda call for the people's participation, but whose acts show that they are not very interested in serious participation. Such officials are not very interested in helping the people correctly understand the extent they have the right to interfere in their country's affairs and believe that if the people do know up to what extent they can interfere, it will be difficult to rule them.

B. The feelings of intellectuals and those who advocate certain views and opinions are hurt more easily than the feelings of ordinary people. And as soon as such people see that the situation does not fully conform with their own aspirations and wishes, they completely negate the existing situation and propagandize the uselessness of participation. This second factor aggravates disillusionment from politics more among the people in Third World countries, where the spirit of absolutism is more obvious, both among the rulers and the ruled. The spirit of absolutism—either everything or nothing—is more widespread among intellectuals and semi-intellectuals. In short, those who see that things are moving in the direction that they want them to move expect others to accept them fully and support them under all circumstances. And the people in such countries believe that the rulers should either fulfill all their expectations and aspirations or be fully rejected.

But the logic of harsh realities is very different from the world of dreams, and it dictates that there should be both cooperation in order to reform wrongs, as well as dissatisfaction with the current situation in order to identify what shortcomings exist. It is in such a constructive atmosphere that the people should be encouraged to be sensitive toward their fate and to realize that their alert presence on the political and social scenes should be considered as their religious and national duty.

Iran: Foreign Correspondents Arrive To Cover Majles Elections

LD0603154396 Tehran IRNA in English 1533 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, March 6, IRNA — Foreign media reporters, cameramen and photographers are arriving here to cover the Majles elections scheduled for next Friday, March 8.

Reports from Mehrabad Airport and the press center set up for foreign reporters indicate that so far over 100 reporters have arrived despite the fact that no formal invitation has been issued for foreign correspondents to cover the elections.

A newly arrived foreign reporter in a brief talk to IRNA on the purpose of his trip to Iran, said that independent and broad-minded journalists welcome the elections which are free from rigging and whose results cannot be predicted.

He also referred to the impact of the Majles elections on the future political structure of Iran, notably on the presidential elections, as another motive for foreign correspondents to cover the polls.

Along with making interviews with Iranian officials, talking to people and visiting polling booths, some of the visiting foreign reporters will also have exclusive talks with officials and will pay a visit to Iranian provinces.

Iran: KEYHAN Notes Election Offenses, Officials' Remarks

NC0603164596 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 26 Feb 96 p 2

[From the "Election Briefs" Column]

[FBIS Translated Text] Engineer Behzad Nabavi attended a question-and-answer session with students of the Sharif Industrial University regarding the stances of the Mojahedin of the Islamic Revolution Organization [MIRO] and groups with similar ideas about the system and the revolution and said: We believed in the Velayat-e Faqih [rule by the supreme jurisconsult] right from the beginning of the revolution. Our main slogan has been our wholehearted belief in the Velayat-e Faqih and a practical commitment to it. If we do not repeat this every day it does not mean that we have forgotten this principle.

—It has been reported that officials at a cooperative in a city in Kerman Province have informed the people that if they do not vote for the candidate whom the officials support they will not receive any oil supplies!

—In answer to objections on the rejection of some candidates' credentials, Morteza Nabavi stated: If a deputy has obtained 18 agreements in principle for his relatives during his term in office, how can his candidacy be endorsed?

—It is said that the mayor of one of Tehran's 20 districts who is a candidate for the fifth Majles sends bazaar merchants and other wealthy people who need things done to his deputy so that he can extort exorbitant sums from them by various illegal means to finance the mayor's campaign.

—Ayatollah Ahmadi Faqih Yazdi, a theological instructor at the Qom seminary, said that participation in the elections was an obligation for the people with a reward in this world and the hereafter.

—The Hamadan Friday imam said that participation in elections was a lawful duty and added: Voting is obligatory for all those who are eligible, similar to attending a prayer meeting. He requested those who do not meet the requirements to follow the dictates of their conscience and to step aside for those who are more competent.

—It has been stated that individuals affiliated with a current deputy of Kordestan Province who is once again contesting the elections are trying to get votes by saying that if he is elected to the Majles he will also become the Kordestan governor general.

—The Kuhdasht Friday imam warned the region's people against any tribal or ethnic biases.

—Shahla Habibi, presidential adviser on Women's Affairs said: The fifth Majles should be more familiar with women's issues and should give priority to solving their problems in their programs.

Iran: Militant Clergy Association's Support for President Queried

LD0603174596 Tehran 'ASR-E MA in Persian 28 Feb 96 p 2

[Unattributed article: "'Support for Hashemi'- As Opposed to Whom?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] It is common practice for political parties to choose the essence of their viewpoints and positions as a campaign slogan. While these slogans must not conflict with the performance of the party or political faction, they are designed in such a way as to be general and comprehensive and to define the outlines of one particular party as opposed to its rivals. In other words, campaign slogans are considered to be a basic depiction of the ideological identity of political organizations.

On this occasion, too, just as during the elections for the fourth term [of the Majles], the Militant Clergy [rowhaniyat] Association has chosen "Support for Hashemi" as one of its campaign slogans. In order to understand the meaning and logic of the slogan, it is necessary to probe further. It would stand to reason to think that support for someone or something suggests opposition to something else. We must now see in opposition to which political faction the said association has decided to support the president, and what form does this support take?

The meaning and justification of this slogan was not too difficult to understand for many people during the campaign for the Fourth Majles, because the Islamic left wing, which was influential in the third term of the Majles, was opposed to some of the policies of the government and was, therefore, described as disruptive and troublesome. Thus, the Militant Clergy Association and like-minded people were able to use this slogan in order to exploit that political situation and benefit from [President 'Ali Akbar] Hashemi [-Rafsanjani]'s social prestige to eliminate their rival.

However, now, in view of the experience of the past four years and, especially, the events of the past two months, the answer to the question "Support for Hashemi" as opposed to what and in what way can hardly be understood at face value, because, in this round of elections, the left is pursuing the strategy of opposing the monopoly of power held by the traditional right-wing, and the Servants of Construction, for their part, have entered the arena on the basis of support for the policies of the government and, specifically, for Hashemi. And the Society for Defending the Values of the Islamic Revolution (?is said to stand in the middle). This leaves the Militant Clergy Association faction and their allies: To what extent are they opposed to the president, who they claim is an effective member and participant in the association? Suffice it to say, in addition to imposing five ministers on him, they were not even prepared to grant him the slightest right, when drawing up their election list, even to the extent of giving him a five-person quota. Instead, they included on their list for these elections people who have raised the idea of discussing Hashemi's incompetence in the Majles.

The allies of the Militant Clergy Association in the Majles, who form the majority, including the RESALAT newspaper, consider opposition to the budget bills and the five-year plan and changing the bills' general direction as being shining points in their record. And, during the past two years, they have spared no effort to deny responsibility for the defeat of current policies which they supported themselves and to try to blame the government instead.

It would seem that the slogan "Support for Hashemi" raised by the Militant Clergy Association has no clear logic or basis and does not address any faction other than that association itself. In fact, the conclusion can be drawn that, just as in the previous elections, this slogan is merely being used in order to exploit Hashemi's social and political prestige and as a means of obtaining victory in the elections — and nothing else.

Iran: People Urged To Vote Against Group Supporting 'Absolutism'

NC0603213996 Tehran SALAM in Persian 26 Feb 95 p 3

[From the "Hello SALAM" column]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Unidentified caller] In view of the rejections of credentials that have occurred, do you still believe that all the people should participate in the elections? If you again encourage the people to participate in the elections, it will be more like joking with them. Please answer, if possible.

[SALAM] What has happened until now was foreseeable even before the beginning of the elections. We saw issues like the quality of the forces of the executive committees and of the supervisory committees, the promotions and demotions at the Interior Ministry under pressure from influential Majles deputies, and other incidents taking place. But these were and are all efforts by one faction. The people and forces supporting other inclinations should display the necessary reaction. And it is possible to show this reaction only by participation because this is how you will cast your votes for candidates other than those from the group that "supports absolutism" and prevent them from achieving absolute power, which is a great ill for the system and the country. Therefore, it is by as much participation as possible that you can try to vote for a Majles that includes all the existing inclinations in society and within the framework of the system. [passage omitted]

Iran: SALAM on Problems Created by Candidates' Promises

NC0603214596 Tehran SALAM in Persian 27 Feb 96 p 2

[From the "Special Answer to a Telephone Call" column]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Unidentified caller] I am a resident in ... [ellipsis as published] area on the Fath highway behind the pasteurization plant. As far as the elections are concerned, I would like to say that during the elections our area has suddenly been filled with much hustle and bustle. During the elections for the past [Majles] term, many candidates from the various factions came to our area and were able to win seats in the Majles by making many promises. For example, Mr. ... [ellipsis as published], esteemed Majles deputy, came to the mosque in our area and promised that by the end of 1373 (that is, last year) our entire area would be covered by the gas distribution network. He was able to get many votes. I would like to say about the promises that the deputies make to the people and about some of the deputies who, God forbid, fool the people that they should first think about all the aspects of what they are saying; they should see if they can fulfill their promises before making them.

[SALAM] Unfortunately, instead of widely distributing their programs for the public to see, the candidates make promises that are basically not part of the deputies legal duties or authorizations. But since they are not members of an official political party or organization—and it is better to say that there are no official political parties and formations in order for these deputies to be their members—they cannot deliver what they promise.

The reason for this is that putting forward a program is, first of all, not the job of only one person. Secondly, putting forward a program in the form of a bill is possible only when a considerable number of deputies agree on it and are able to approve the said bill through cooperation and coordination in the Majles and to hand it over to the government for implementation. And possibly it is because of this that the major functionaries who are in charge of such affairs oppose the formation of political groups. If deputies from one or several strong political parties gain seats in the Majles, the management of affairs will no longer be solely in the hands of a limited number of people and the possibility of ensuring life-long power by such a limited number will be removed. [passage omitted]

The question that arises here is: Does the entire parliamentary system and a ruling structure that is based on referendums and elections suffer from such problems? In other words, do all election systems suffer from this? Are the countries that experienced such systems dozens of years before us and from which we have borrowed these systems facing such problems, or have they solved all or some of these problems? And if these problems are solved, can we make use of their experience as we have borrowed the principle of a parliamentary system, elections, the division of powers, and so on from them?

Needless to say, since capitalism and its culture rule in these countries, the deputies also do not hide the fact that they and their parties are supported by the capitalists who officially undertake their campaign expenses in return for support. At any rate, we hope to be able to carefully examine all aspects of this topic with the help of people who are well-versed in this matter. Thus, we will take a step toward strengthening the Islamic Republic's foundations.

Iran: Official Warns Against 'U.S. Lackeys' in Elections

NC0603220196 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 24 Feb 96 p 2

[Report on an interview with Ayatollah Khamene'i's deputy in the Martyrs' Foundation Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Rahimian with unidentified KEYHAN correspondent in Tehran; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The level of the participation of people in various social, political, and economic matters depends on the scale of the Islamic nature of our performance and the confidence that they have in us.

This was stated by Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Rahimian, deputy of the Vali-ye Faqih [supreme jurisconsult] and head of the Martyrs' Foundation, speaking to a KEYHAN correspondent. He added: At times it is said that the basis of our beliefs is merely to provide for the people's welfare, housing, and automobiles and to give preference to economic development over cultural development. We believe that these are secondary and peripheral to all other considerations—that is Islam, the Koran, and the supremacy of the Koran and Divine injunctions. We believe that the majority of people are also of the same opinion. [passage omitted]

Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Rahimian said: The Fifth Majles should be anti-Western and opposed to the powers of world arrogance. The Fifth Majles should stand up to them with as much intensity and forcefulness as the extent of their hostility toward us and Islam, and their deep animosity which they have displayed against occupied Palestine, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and other Islamic countries. It should not relinquish its struggle even for a second.

Rahimian described the role of factions and groups as less effective in promoting popular participation in elections and added: I do not wish to state that I do not accept parties and factions or that they are completely ineffective in fostering popular participation. I do believe that these are very superficial tactics and probably un-Islamic, and do not have a firm base or infrastructure. One cannot bring people together with a formation or party. On Jerusalem Day, 11 February, the people come together spontaneously and raise united slogans, as these are their religious beliefs, and they pour onto the streets as a torrent. They become immersed in their love of God and the system and shout such slogans in unison.

He continued: However the groups and formations which have been established recently are a common tactic, used everywhere. This leads to rivalry and petty bickering in order to drag the people to the scene. Hence this cannot be considered a hundred percent Islamic method. [passage omitted]

He commented on the latest U.S. policy of toppling the Islamic Republic of Iran in two ways—through a cultural assault, and by infiltration of pro-U.S. elements into the country's decisionmaking apparatus. Rahimian said: First and foremost the United States is banking on a cultural assault and in fact propagating countervalues in our society. The other path is to induct elements affiliated with its own clique into the decisionmaking channels and power centers. It is now determined to achieve this through the elections for the Fifth Majles which is the key sector of the system.

Rahimian described this U.S. policy at this juncture, when little time remains until the elections, as a policy of the sale and purchase of human beings and the infiltration of its affiliated elements into the Majles. He added: From the vantage point of the people, the liberals [preceding word in English] are not important as the people have understood them well and will never vote for them. The people should be vigilant on the day of the elections, as there are candidates, even though they may ostensibly not be the candidates of the illegal Freedom Movement or other such groups or potential U.S. lackeys. But there are some who are not sensitive enough to the issue of hostility to the United States or are a bit ambivalent with regard to values and countervalues.

He continued: This in itself would suffice for the United States as it is proceeding in this direction step by step. The United States is prepared to spend billions of dollars so that such candidates may be inducted into the Majles.

Rahimian added: The people should know that the capitalists are in the U.S. hands and the U.S. hands are in the grasp of the Monafeqin [hypocrites—pejorative term for the Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization] and the Monafeqin's hands are in Saddam's hands. All the infidels are part of a single joint network. Hence the people should fear the capitalists and all those backed by capitalists and their funds. [passage omitted]

Iran: Reader Questions Omission of People From Elections

NC0703073496 Tehran SALAM in Persian 24 Feb 96 p 2

["Special Answer to a Telephone Call" column]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Unidentified caller] Is the danger of the entry into the Majles by parties and groups supporting the left greater for the revolution and the system than the danger posed by the liberals and the Freedom Movement? Will the rejection of the credentials of people who sympathize with and support the revolution solve any of the problems of the system and of the revolution or will this add to them? Do we want liberals to enter the Majles instead of these people? Did the imam of the ummah not state that there should be two factions on the scene of the revolution? If you beat your chests for the victory of the imam's line, why do you not act according to the will and testament of the late imam?

[SALAM] Although the efforts by the rightist faction after the demise of his eminence the imam, may his soul be sanctified, aimed at removing the imam-line faction from the country's political scene are condemned and are contrary to the interests of the revolution and the system, it is interesting to note how the sincere elements in this [rightist] faction think that their efforts are in the interest of the system. The important question is why should a group make such a great mistake and think that it is working for God and for the revolution? We may list many reasons for this but we will refer to only one here: When the law is not carefully observed in the management of the system and the revolution and the interests of the system and the country are regulated according to individual views, this method will spread to all management levels. As a result, everyone will grant himself the right to base the interests of the nation on his individual views, assessments, and justifications.

Society's problems double when the people are called upon to observe laws and are punished for violations, while others who are strong act according to their own whims and will and ignore the law. It is here that others — on whatever decisionmaking level — think they also have the right and authority to act according to their own wishes and will along with their own propaganda on the need for discipline. As a result, this negative situation spreads throughout society. Things go wrong when people speak about the law, but act according to their own tastes and wishes and thus trample on the law. We then conclude that all the people — from the highest to the lowest levels — should abide by the law and refrain from acting according to their personal wishes. To prove our point, it is only necessary for an impartial group to examine the behavior of the executive committees throughout the country to see the spread of this illness of acting according to one's personal wishes and ignoring the law.

If everybody observes the law, and if, under the authority of the law, some people are omitted from the scene and do not gain even one vote in the elections, then this will be acceptable. Also, if — on the basis of the vote of one person with group inclinations outside the law — liberals or people affiliated with a specific group are omitted from the scene, according to our dear reader, this procedure and this omission is contrary to the interests of the system. The harm done by the presence of such people in the country's political scene is far less than the violation of the law and acting according to one's personal views.

Iran: Article Views Consequences of Population Increase

LD0603205396 Tehran HAMSHAHRI in Persian 4 Mar 96 p 1

[Unattributed article: "Diary: The Days Ahead"]

[FBIS Translated Text] At this moment our country has about 63 million inhabitants. This will increase to more than 68 million by 1377 [year beginning 21 March 1998] and 100 million by 1390 [year beginning 21 March 2010]. Despite the successful implementation of the government's population control policies, right now 4,000 new guests sit at this country's table every morning whose bread requirement is about 200,000 tonnes every year. This rate of population growth has already increased the number of those under 20 to more than 35 million and the current number of those aged 15 to 24 is more than 12 million.

On that basis, the number of marriages in the country will increase from 430,000 in 1372 [year beginning 21 March 1993] to around 643,000 in 1390. In the same period, the number of houses required will rise from 10 million units to 21 million. Some 77 million people will be dwelling in the cities... That means that from now on there will be an annual need for 600,000 "extra" housing units, 1,000,000 school chairs, 50,000 classrooms, and the same number of teachers... for conditions to stay the same as now and if we do not seek to take even one step forward. That is under conditions where, for instance, our per capita consumption of steel and cement is still negligible compared to our neighbors. A further piece of bad news is that we will not have any more oil to export in 15 years.

Of course this discourse is not intended to portray the country's situation as frightening. In the past six years, the volume of development and infrastructural work in the country has been such as to suffice in turning the situation from "critical" to "normal." That is no mean task. But none of us — the leaders, officials, and each and every one of the people — wish our ancient land to "stand still" and thus, per force, mar its pride. But if we do not mobilize all our resources and facilities to compensate the underdevelopment and to secure the new requirements from the population and technological [points of view], inevitably there will be increased underdevelopment and the country will be "marginalized" in the international order. Thus, the destruction of pride and political independence will be assured.

If, in the first instance, we consider the "mobilization of the resources" to mean utilizing and mobilizing "all" the country's manpower and expert power — the essential capital of any country — in all arenas, then such a lofty and great objective cannot be attained but through the active participation of "all" the people. That is why the Fifth Majles elections are so "crucial" in the eyes of the people.

Facing such great challenges in the vast expanse of Iran and the prospect of such challenges in the fifteenth century [beginning 21 March 2020] require not only the active participation of all the people in the process of political participation, but also need — as a manifestation and crystallization of that participation — access to the holy site of the Islamic Consultative Majles by forces that will be capable of explaining and determining a proper position for our country in the world order through a deep and pro-active understanding of the current situation and the future panorama of Iran and the world, and which will not look upon the vast world with unwise narrowmindedness.

Iran: SALAM To Reappear 9 Mar After 2-Day Ban

*LD0603174296 Tehran IRNA in English
1622 GMT 6 Mar 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, March 6, IRNA — The morning Persian-language daily 'SALAM' announced here on Wednesday it would appear on the news stands as of Saturday after a two-day stop.

Editor-in-chief of the newspaper Hojjat ol-Eslam Mohammad Musavi Kho'iniha, had earlier announced that upon an instruction by judicial officials, the newspaper would not be printed for two days. He told IRNA that he had been informed of the decision on Tuesday night.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Kho'iniha refused to make any comment on the possible reasons for the two-day stop in publication of the newspaper.

Iran: Further on Temporary Closure of SALAM

*LD0703100796 Tehran IRNA in English
0914 GMT 7 Mar 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, March 7, IRNA — The morning Persian-language daily, SALAM, will remain closed on 6 and 7 March due to its attempt to play down a statement of the office of the leader of the Islamic Revolution [Khamene'i] in its Tuesday [5 March] edition, said the special prosecutor for the clergy, Hojjat ol-Eslam Gholam Hoseynn Mohseni, Wednesday evening.

After publication of a statement by the leader's office stating that the leader has not interfered in approval or refusal of eligibility of the Majles candidates, the paper wrote that a member of the leader's office had taken part in the Guardians Council's session on evaluating eligibility of the candidates.

According to the Iranian press law, approved by the Majles, the prosecutor can temporarily ban publication of a paper for a maximum period of ten days.

The managing director of the paper, Hojjat ol-Eslam Seyyed Mohammad Musavi Kho'iniha, in a contact with IRNA on Wednesday, without going into details, said that the daily will remain closed for two consecutive days and will appear on news stands on Saturday, March 9.

Pakistan

Pakistan: Spokesman Denies Reported Preparations for Nuclear Test

*BK0703015096 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network
in Urdu 0100 GMT 7 Mar 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Pakistan has once again cautioned the world community that Indian preparations for a second nuclear test will force the Pakistani Government to remain alert and take steps for its security. A Foreign Office spokesman said in Islamabad yesterday that India's proposed steps are a matter of concern and pose a threat to regional security. The spokesman drew the attention of the global mass media to the irrefutable Indian action of testing of nuclear-capable Prithvi missiles and its other nuclear preparations. The spokesman said that India is simultaneously creating obstacles to an agreement on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty in Geneva.

The spokesman called THE WASHINGTON POST report that Pakistan was preparing for an underground nuclear test a premeditated media campaign against Pakistan. He said the report is based on incorrect information from U.S. intelligence agencies and the world media. The spokesman said this information is aimed at diverting attention from the practical steps being taken by India for the proposed preparations for the blast, and this should not be allowed.

Pakistan: 'Appropriate Steps' Said Planned if India Tests Bomb

*BK0703114096 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network
in English 1100 GMT 7 Mar 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pakistan will take appropriate steps to safeguard its security if India goes for another nuclear test. Answering questions by newsmen in Islamabad this afternoon, a Foreign Office spokesman reiterated Pakistan's principled policy on the nuclear issue. He said, having nuclear capability, it has been decided at the highest level not to use it for nonpeaceful purposes. He said Pakistan has been in the vanguard to efforts, regionally and globally, to advance the cause of nuclear nonproliferation.

He pointed out that many proposals put forward by Pakistan, including simultaneous signing of NPT [Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty] with India and the creation of nuclear weapon-free zone in South Asia, could not succeed because of India's negative attitude. He said developments across the border have further retarded the process of nonproliferation. The spokesman said Pakistan was working on the global front toward a truly comprehensive, equitable, and nondiscriminatory Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. He emphasized that it is India which is creating road blocks.

Pakistan: Bhutto on Nuclear Program, Other Issues

NC0603162196 Cairo AKHBAR AL-YAWM in Arabic 2 Mar 96 p 3

[Interview with Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto by Husayn 'Abd-al-Qadir in Islamabad; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] ['Abd-al-Qadir] Pakistan's nuclear program has always been a subject for debate and concern from the western countries. What is the nature of this program and has Pakistan really abandoned it?

[Bhutto] There are groundless concerns about Pakistan's nuclear program. Pakistan has reiterated its commitment to nuclear nonproliferation. I stress once again that our nuclear program is completely peaceful and has never been directed toward the production of nuclear weapons.

We are committed to the development of Pakistan's peaceful nuclear program for the purpose of achieving the country's economic and social development objectives. Pakistan lacks energy. Pakistan has one of the highest consumption rates of energy per person, even in comparison with other developing countries. Hence, we want our peaceful nuclear program to fulfill our increasing demand for energy. The west should be worried about India's intentions, in light of reliable reports about India's preparations to carry out a nuclear test.

India's resumption of nuclear tests will strongly upset regional stability and foil international efforts to prevent nuclear proliferation. It will also have a negative effect on the constant efforts made in Geneva to reach an agreement on the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.

The Indian leadership's realization of the dangers of taking such a step has become a matter of urgency. Such a step will endanger efforts to ban nuclear proliferation on the regional and international levels. Additionally, it will contradict with India's declaration of a commitment to work to achieve nuclear disarmament and rid the world of nuclear weapons.

['Abd-al-Qadir] The opposition recently criticized you severely for your policy on dealing with some issues, particularly the accusations leveled against you of hostility to ulemas and pursuing an anti-Islam policy?

[Bhutto] The opposition's claims that my government is hostile to the ulemas of Islam are baseless. Pakistan is an Islamic country. My government is a strong supporter of the sacred principles of Islam, which are based on understanding, tolerance, and love between all human beings.

Thus, we are opposed to terrorism and bigotry in the name of Islam. A large number of Muslim ulemas and thinkers visited Pakistan in the past two years, and this reflects our respect for Islam and for the ulemas.

['Abd-al-Qadir] What is your assessment of the elections India intends to hold in Kashmir? What impact will these elections have on the Kashmir problem in the future?

[Bhutto] The Indian Government decided to extend the term of direct presidential rule on the part of Kashmir that India controls—six more months beginning 18 January 1996. It is clear, from the repeated extensions of direct presidential rule in the part of Kashmir that it controls, that the Indian government is not in a position to pursue a reliable or practical policy in this disputed area. The conference of the Freedom Party, which is considered to represent the Kashmiri people, does not consider holding these elections as an alternative to their demand for a general referendum under UN supervision, as outlined in the UN Security Council resolutions on this issue. The elections, therefore, will not succeed in bringing the Kashmir problem nearer to a solution. Giving the Kashmiri people the right to determine their future is the only solution to the Kashmiri problem.

['Abd-al-Qadir] Do you see any scenarios for an acceptable settlement to the Kashmir issue, similar to the peace agreements in the Middle East?

[Bhutto] Pakistan believes in the need to find a peaceful settlement to the dispute over Kashmir through negotiations in accordance with UN resolutions. The people of Jammu and Kashmir must decide if they want to join Pakistan or India. This is their right and no any other party has a right to determine their fate.

['Abd-al-Qadir] Does Pakistan approve of holding a general referendum in the part known as Azad Kashmir, in accordance with the UN resolutions?

[Bhutto] The UN Security Council resolutions clearly specify that a general referendum must be held in Jammu and Kashmir. Pakistan emphasizes its adherence to its commitments to the United Nations and the Kashmiri people.

['Abd-al-Qadir] What is Pakistan's view of the current conflict in Afghanistan? What mediation efforts are you making, and is there a change in Pakistan's policy on Afghanistan?

[Bhutto] The ongoing fighting among the rival groups in Afghanistan is a source of worry for Pakistan. Since we are a neighbor of Afghanistan, we are very interested in establishing peace and stability in it. Pakistan hopes that peace and stability will be restored in Afghanistan so that the 1.5 million Afghan refugees living in Pakistan can safely return to their homes.

We fully believe that a solution to the Afghan problem is the responsibility of the Afghan people themselves. Pakistan will play any role to help achieve peace and reconciliation in Afghanistan. We also stress our support for the efforts being made by the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Countries to bring about peace and reconciliation in Afghanistan.

Pakistan is pursuing a policy of full neutrality and non-interference in Afghanistan's internal affairs; we do not prefer any group to another in that country. We believe that establishing a broad-base government representing all ethnic and demographic groups, disarming Kabul, forming a neutral security force, and collecting heavy weapons will end violence in Afghanistan and restore peace in this war-torn country.

['Abd-al-Qadir] In 1993, before you assumed power, a serious crisis emerged when the United States intended to declare Pakistan as a terrorist country. How did you manage to overcome the crisis?

[Bhutto] Our support for Kashmir freedom fighters, who are struggling to achieve their inalienable right to self-determination — a right granted to them by the world community through the many relevant UN Security Council resolutions, provoked India into accusing us of being a sponsor of terrorism. This accusation is baseless. Pakistan never extended material support for Kashmir freedom fighters. We only extend political, moral, and diplomatic support, and we will continue to do so. Kashmir is internationally known as a disputed region, and we are a party to this dispute.

Some U.S. Administration and Congress officials were at first deceived by the Indian propaganda, but they soon found that it was false. In July 1993, the then U.S. secretary of state stressed that there was no reason to place Pakistan on the list of states that sponsor terrorism. Finally, the United States came to realize that Indian propaganda has no limit. In December, the Indian interior minister accused the United States of assisting Kashmir freedom fighters. So, the United States itself was targeted by the same false, malicious propaganda.

Pakistan is a victim, not a sponsor, of state terrorism. Therefore, my government is fully committed to the policy of combating terrorism, irrespective of its place.

['Abd-al-Qadir] Do you think some terrorists are still hiding in Pakistan? How do you think this problem can be solved?

[Bhutto] As a result of continuing and painstaking efforts to apply the law against terrorists, they are leaving Pakistan. Those who do not possess legal documents are crossing the border into Afghanistan. As you know, Pakistan was also a victim of terrorism. Concerning my opinion, it is no different than that of the rest of the democratic and civilized world. Terrorism cannot be ignored or tolerated; it must be crushed forcefully, and this is exactly what my government is determined to do.

['Abd-al-Qadir] In 1994 Pakistan and Egypt signed an agreement on the extradition of criminals. On the basis of this agreement, Pakistan handed a group of terrorists over to Egypt. This prompted the terrorist groups to threaten Pakistan with revenge. Will these threats make Pakistan desist from implementing this policy?

[Bhutto] My government has always opposed terrorism. We strongly condemn terrorism and are committed to confronting this danger with all possible means. Pakistan will never yield to these terrorist groups' threats. We will continue our policy on this issue and cooperate with the international community to contain this problem.

['Abd-al-Qadir] Do you believe that the blowing up of the Egyptian embassy in Islamabad had any effect on Egyptian-Pakistani relations?

[Bhutto] The attack on the Egyptian diplomatic mission in Islamabad has again underlined the need for large scale international cooperation and coordination in order to avoid a repetition of these incidents.

Our relations with Egypt are established on firm and old historic bases. The joint Egyptian-Pakistani ministerial committee recently held its first meeting and came up with a number of important agreements. This reflects the attention we pay to the developing and strengthening of our brotherly relations with Egypt.

['Abd-al-Qadir] Has the Pakistani Government taken any measures to ensure that such an incident will not be repeated in the future?

[Bhutto] A guard unit of 14 security men was deployed at the Egyptian Embassy when the explosion happened. One member of this unit was killed in the explosion. The security measures for all foreign missions in general and the Egyptian Embassy in particular are daily reviewed and strengthened. The Pakistani Government and police are eager to maintain direct and effective contacts with all the diplomatic missions so as not to lose any time when there is a need to adopt security arrangements or preventive measures because information is received about possible threats. Since it is difficult to confront suicidal attacks, effective measures have been taken to get prior information from sources that expect such attacks.

['Abd-al-Qadir] In the past you intended to visit the territories under the Palestinian National Authority's control but canceled the visit due to certain circumstances. Is such a visit still possible?

[Bhutto] I have not abandoned the plan to visit Palestine. God willing, I will take the opportunity to visit it at the proper time. We supported our Palestinian brothers during their struggle to establish an independent homeland and we will continue our support. We wish them success in their efforts to enhance their gains and achieve their objectives.

Pakistan: Spokesman Claims 'Unprovoked' Indian Firing Across Boundary

BK0703021596 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Indian Border Security Force has again resorted to unprovoked firing in violating the working boundary [preceding two words in English] in the Jammu-Sialkot region. A Defense Ministry spokesman said there was an exchange of fire between Pakistan Rangers and Indian troops as a result of this unprovoked action.

Pakistan: Iranian Official Says No Regional Alliance Without Islamabad

LD0703093196 Tehran IRNA in English 0857 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, March 7, IRNA — Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Morteza Sarmadi has ruled out possibility of any viable alliance in the region without Pakistan.

Speaking at a reception hosted in his honor in Lahore, Pakistan, on Wednesday [6 March], he said any alliance comprising Russia, India, China and Iran will be incomplete without the participation of Pakistan.

Sarmadi who is on an official visit to Pakistan, after having talks with the officials in Islamabad is now in the provincial capital of Punjab and have had meetings with the provincial authorities.

The Iranian deputy foreign minister said that the period of neo-colonialism would soon come to an end. "Only the people charged with the power of faith and conviction will rule the world in the coming century," he added.

He said the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina were being subjected to atrocities only for being Muslims. The West had forgotten the golden principles of human rights while dealing with the Bosnian Muslims, he regretted.

Sarmadi urged the Muslims to unite. He said only the united Muslim ummah could cope with the threats posed by the Western new world order.

Pakistan: Defense Cooperation Meeting With UK Team Ends

BK0703022496 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The first meeting of the Pakistan-United Kingdom Defense Cooperation Forum ended in Rawalpindi today. Secretary of Defense Production Mazhar Rafi represented Pakistan at the meeting, while the UK was represented by Defense Under Secretary Richard Morton. They expressed satisfaction on the outcome of the forum. The working groups on military training and other defense- related matters also held a meeting. The two countries agreed to use the forum to exchange information and share experiences in areas of mutual interest, including the peacekeeping operations. The UK delegation conveyed the willingness of the British Armed Forces to participate in the golden jubilee celebrations of Pakistan's independence.

Pakistan: Foreign Minister Comments on Bhutto's Brunei Visit

BK0703022896 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali has said that the prime minister's visit to Brunei is a reflection of Pakistan's new policy to increase its business relations with Asian countries. In an interview with Radio Pakistan's correspondent Syed Nazir Bukhari, he said that through this visit, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has been able to establish a very good rapport with the Sultan of Brunei. He said the visit will help Pakistan to become economically closer to ASEAN countries, which constitute a large and sound business market.

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